



BRINGING THE FARM TO LIVE IN ANOTHER WORLD

BOOK 04

Ming Yu

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

Bringing The Farm To Live In Another World

(带着农场混异界)

by

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Synopsis

A series about a man who awakens in a strange land to find himself in the body of a complete waste of human life. He has to try to help rebuild a family that has fallen to only himself and his few retainers. As the first arc of the story it grows and becomes an epic journey of adapting to new land while crippled by a drug he was forced to ingest as he was banished to a wasteland by the old nobles of the capital after his family sided with the wrong heir to the throne in line for succession.

His only aid in this unfamiliar world is a strange ability that was present when he awoke in his new body. He's got the ability to enter a world that is basically a farming simulation game, except all of the food is usable in the outside world. For someone stuck in a wasteland, only this cheat will help him survive and move forward in this unfamiliar world along with his few loyal retainers as he tries to rebuild a fallen family. Farming, selling crops, trying to find a way forward with a body that's crippled.

Follow the journey of Zhao Hai as he lives his life in a magical world filled with intrigue, farming, business, battle, more farming, and other exciting non farming things, followed by farming and cultivation.

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Chapter 301 – Captives

Zhao Hai was sitting inside a tent drinking some mutton soup and eating some mutton. This time, they weren't hurrying along anymore since they just arrived at an area not far away from Herculean Bull's old camp.

Wales drunk an entire bowl of soup and ate a piece of mutton, after feeling nourished he turned to Zhao Hai and asked, "Little Hai, are you sure that the Fighting Bulls didn't see us?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "Don't worry brother, the Fighting Bulls had not come out of the camp after all this time, so it'll be impossible for them to spot us. But brother needs to prepare your heart, the Fighting Bulls hadn't treated you clansmen properly." Zhao Hai stopped talking at this point.

Wales looked at Zhao Hai, "Little Hai, what's it like there?"

Zhao Hai sighed, "They didn't provide any tents for your clansmen, they also didn't give them some padded clothing, and they were only fed once every few days . Of the three hundred thousand captured Herculean Bulls, two hundred thousand remain."

Wales' eyes almost fell from their sockets, he stared blankly, one could see veins bulging on his head. Zhao Hai hurriedly added, "Big Brother, don't be angry, we can save your people soon."

Wales took deep breaths and closed his eyes, it took a while for him to calm down. He turned to Zhao Hai, "Right, we can take revenge soon. Brother Hai, I want to thank you. Because of you all of these became possible."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "Big Brother is too polite, I'm the Herculean Bull's Crown Prince, isn't this what I should be doing? Brother, currently, the clansmen are grouped together, the elderly are placed at the outer parts while the women and children are in

the middle, warming each other up by talking a walk from time to time. However, there were no Fighting Bulls monitoring them, so I can go there ahead and supply them some food, if there are weapons, I could also deliver it to them so that when we launch our attack, they may be able to help out.”

Wales shook his head, “We can give them food, but not weapons. They suffered for a long time, their bodies have long since grew weak. If we let them fight, they may just die in vain.”

At this time, Mendez interjected while shaking his head, “Brother Seven, I agree with Little Hai’s words. We should give them weapons, not only can they provide help in killing the enemy, they could also use the weapons as a means of self defense. If we are battling, what if the Fighting Bulls were to send some people to kill them? Thus we should provide them weapons.”

Yale also nodded, “I also agree that we should give them weapons, but we can’t give them weapons that are too large, hatchets would be good, as they are not too conspicuous. Right, Wales did the Supreme Elder say when we’ll begin?”

Wales replied with a serious tone, “The day after tomorrow. We cannot wait for too long, the earlier the better.”

Yale nodded and said, “At night?”

Wales nodded, “Yes, a surprise attack at night.”

Yale asked again, “Did the Mastiff elder arrive? How many are there?”

Wales said, “They arrived, two came. I actually didn’t hope that the Mastiffs would send their three elders, but sending two is certainly a surprise.”

Yale added, “Good, let everyone take a rest tomorrow and prepare for the attack the day after tomorrow.” They want to attack the Fighting Bulls with the element of surprise. So while they were moving, they were very careful to not come across any

other tribes along the way, minimizing the advantages that the Fighting Bulls could acquire.

What they're planning was the right thing to do, but moving around with five hundred thousand people while remaining undetected was challenging. Fortunately, beastmen tend to remain inside their camps during winter, so Zhao Hai lent Wales some hawks to survey the area ahead to spot some tents and then avoided those areas.

This aid, along with his previous deeds, were taken by all the Herculean Bulls at heart. Now they were convinced that without Zhao Hai, their counterattack wouldn't be possible. This opportunity was given to them by Zhao Hai, thus the Herculean Bulls have been very respectful to him.

In the current Herculean Bull clan, even though Zhao Hai wasn't a beastman, his position wasn't any lower than elder Kony. Now, every time Zhao delivered them food, no matter old or young, they would give Zhao Hai their salutes, as a sign of their innermost gratitude.

At this point, Zhao Hai told Wales, "Big Brother, it would be better if you send a clan representative with me. Otherwise, since the other clansmen do not know of me, they may make a fuss, and the Fighting Bulls might be alerted."

Wales knew that Zhao Hai was about to give his captured clansmen some food. He nodded and replied, "Right, Uncle Kony, please go together with Little Hai. I'll have the hatchets prepared right now."

Kony didn't oppose, he nodded and replied, "Good, when it comes to familiarity with the other clansmen, I'm at the advantage so it's right that I come."

At this time, Mendez exited the tent to fetch the hatchets. He got a few of them, enough for a person to wield one each. Although these hatchets weren't large, in the hand of the Herculean Bulls

they would be equally terrifying.

Before long, all of the hatchets were collected and placed in the middle of the camp. Zhao Hai looked at Wales and said, “Well, Brother, I’ll go now.” After having said that, the middle of the camp was immediately covered in a black fog taking Zhao Hai and Kony along. When the black fog disappeared, the two also vanished from the camp.

When the two appeared, they were already not far from the Fighting Bulls encampment, it was a huge camp. To be honest, this was actually the Herculean Bull’s old camp, but now it was acquired by the Fighting Bulls.

Kony can finally see the situation outside now that they were so close from the camp. Kony’s eyes gave off a bit of light but Zhao Hai didn’t comment on it. They were again wrapped by the black fog and reappeared right beside a ragged group. These people wore expressionless faces and were moving constantly. They were bundled together with almost having no gap between them.

This time, Zhao Hai used Earth Magic to elevate the place that they were in. Now they were able to see the whole group of Herculean Bull captives.

The Herculean Bull captives didn’t have anything to warm themselves up. So in order to survive the freezing winter, they crowded together to share warmth and kept moving around like a group of penguins. The person outside would be switched from time to time by someone from the inside so that nobody would freeze to death quickly.

Although their methods did work, not everyone could survive the freezing cold and snowstorms. Of the three hundred thousand captives, only less than two hundred thousand remain.

Many of those who died were the elderly, in order to save the Herculean Bull children, they placed the children in the middle of the group and stood outside to block off the cold winds. If the

Fighting Bulls were to send some food, the children would be the first to eat. Because of the cold and hunger, many people died as a consequence.

When Kony saw his clansmen, he grit his teeth almost to the point of crushing them. Then he patted the side of a clansman's face since they didn't manage to notice him, and with his old voice he said, "Carrik, Carrik, I'm Kony, can you still recognize me?"

The Herculean Bull woke up and started to turn his eyes. He glanced at Kony and seemed to not see him. He closed his eyes again before he opened them up quickly, as though in disbelief, the clansman looked around and then said with a lowered voice, "Elder, why are you here? Were you also caught?"

Due to the small commotion, the surrounding people came to notice the new arrivals. But since all were elderly Herculean Bulls, some of them knew that Kony was able to escape and was thus surprised to see him here. However, since they were experienced, they didn't make any loud noises and seemed to continue on with what they're doing while engulfing Kony and Zhao Hai towards the middle of the group.

Kony looked at Carrik and shook his head, his eyes were tearful, "This old man has made you suffer, but your suffering will soon be over. The Seventh Prince Wales has managed to return to the clan and became the new chieftain. He took us back here to seek vengeance, you only need to wait for two days. In two days, we will attack the Fighting Bull clan. This is the chieftain's Beheading Blood Oath Brother and also our tribes Crown Prince Zhao Hai. He is also a formidable magician and today he brought us here to deliver you food and weapons. You only need to endure for two more days."

Carrik looked excitedly at Kony, his tears were flowing down. It was a very difficult time for them, they were waiting for this day and it finally arrived.

At this time, the sky had already turned dark, and the Fighting Bull camp was very quiet, they seemed to have gone to bed. In such a weather, even Polar Bears and Giant Tigers who loved fighting would stay inside their camp to rest.

They didn't fear that the Herculean Bulls would escape. In such a weather, if the Herculean Bulls were to try to escape without any warm clothes, then they would definitely freeze in the prairie. Thus they didn't send anyone to monitor the captives, but only sent someone look out for their argali and grain.

Fortunately, Carrik and the others were veterans who had fought many battles. Although they were old and captured, they immediately calmed down, which was a skill they had acquired. Thus, the group resumed their tranquility after only a few moments as though there weren't anything new happening.

Kony looked at their calmness and then turned his head to Carrik, "Pass on the information that we have come back, so that they do not make a ruckus, act as though nothing's going on"

Carrik nodded, immediately conveyed the message to the people around and pass it on. The message was simple, Elder Kony has returned, the other clansmen has returned.

This information spread like a ripple as though a pebble had disturbed the pond. The message spread and then Zhao Hai also began giving out mutton and mutton soup. He didn't give them much, only half a jin of lamb as well as a bowl of soup.

They did not dare speak too loudly, afraid that the Fighting Bulls might hear. Currently, Carrik didn't go with the other clansmen, but followed Kony and Zhao Hai at the side to help the clansmen.

Zhao Hai started with the elderly first, some of these elderly were almost beyond saving, they need food the most.

Carrik also came to know Zhao Hai's magic, he saw that in Zhao Hai's hand a bowl of hot soup and some warm mutton would

suddenly appear. When he looked at Zhao Hai, he seemed to see the Beast God.

Zhao Hai didn't give their weapons immediately, he was afraid of being found out by the Fighting Bulls. He only gave them some food. Then, in between the cover of Carrik and the others, they headed towards the center of the group where the women and children were and gave them some food.

Zhao Hai found out that giving food this time was more difficult. Back at the main camp, he only needed to send food to each tent, but this time he needed to deliver them one by one to the hands of the people.

Zhao Hai was busy until dawn. Although it was winter, Zhao Hai and Kony were sweating. When the morning came, all of the people had already drank hot soup and ate warm mutton. Kony then told Carrik about their means of transfer and then vanished from the group with Zhao Hai.

Although Carrik still had to endure the cold winds here, they now have a burning hope in their hearts. If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

When Zhao Hai and Kony returned to the main camp, Wales still had not rested and had been waiting for them. Looking at their unsightly complexion, Wales decided to walk to them instead.

Zhao Hai was already tired and didn't have the energy to say a few words, he just waved his hand and went to the side to lie down. Kony fared better than Zhao Hai since he had a beastman's stamina, and also he didn't personally hand out the food one by one to the clansmen back then. Kony nodded at Wales and said, "The food has been given, but Little Hai didn't give them the weapons in fear of it being discovered. He decided to give the weapons tomorrow as we gave the evening meal, I also agreed with this."

Wales nodded and asked, "How were the clansmen?"

Kony replied, “There were less than two hundred thousand people left. Calculating the combat potential with the elderly and the women, they would amount to one hundred and fifty thousand which is still a formidable force. The rest have died of freezing or starvation and is now lying down on the prairie.”

Wales, angrily snorted, “Fighting Bulls, I’ll certainly make you into slaves for generations.”

At this time the sound of snoring could be heard. Wales turned to look at where it came from, but realized that it was just Zhao Hai, tired and has fallen asleep.

Chapter 302 – Time for Revenge

Wales looked at Zhao Hai sleeping soundly, he sighed and turned to Mendez, “Sixth Brother, please return Little Hai to his tent, have Laura take care of him. Don’t disturb him today.”

Mendez asked, “But what about breakfast?”

Wales sighed and said, “Just tell everyone to endure it today. Little Hai is too tired, these days he’s the busiest person out of all of us.”

Mendez didn’t say anymore, he picked Zhao Hai up and went outside, soon he arrived at Zhao Hai’s tent and had Laura receive Zhao Hai.

Laura looked at Zhao Hai’s state and thought that he was injured. She put Zhao Hai on the ground hastily and then whispered with a low voice, “Cai’er, Cai’er, quickly come out.”

Cai’er’s form appeared, Laura immediately asked, “Cai’er, what’s all this about? What happened to Elder Brother Hai?”

Cai’er looked at Zhao Hai and said, “He’s alright, just resting. He only needs to drink water from the space to get well.” After saying this, a small vine appeared in front of Zhao Hai’s mouth, it reached towards the mouth’s opening and then water from the space smoothly rolled off the vine into Zhao Hai’s mouth.

After drinking a mouthful, Zhao Hai opened his eyes. He saw Laura and couldn’t help but be surprised, he touched his head and asked, “I fell asleep?”

Laura’s heart ached when looking at Zhao Hai, she looked at him and said, “Brother Hai, why do you try so hard? You need to be careful, we don’t know what we’d do if you get sick.”

Zhao Hai faintly smiled, “I’m alright, it’s nothing, I’ll only be busy for another two days. In a moment, we’ll go give them breakfast. You did not see those who were captured by the Fighting

Bulls, of the three hundred thousand, a hundred thousand died. Now only less than two hundred thousand Herculean Bull captives were left, they were all dressed in unpadded clothes while having little to no food and drink. Those Fighting Bulls were too vicious.”

While speaking of this, Zhao Hai’s complexion was bad. He saw the slaves on West Wonder King’s camp as well as various slaves all throughout the prairie, but this was the first time he saw that slaves were treated like this. It was obvious that the people involved wanted the Herculean Bulls to die out completely.

This was the first time that Laura has heard of this incident since Zhao Hai never told them before. Now that she heard this information, she couldn’t help but look shocked at Zhao Hai.

Laura had also seen beastmen slaves, she also saw Human slaves in the past, but the way the Fighting Bulls treated their slaves was a first for Laura.

Although the humans did not treat their slaves that well, they didn’t make their slaves die at will. After all, the slaves were also their property, and nobody is willing to just throw away their properties.

The beastmen slaves were actually treated better compared to human slaves, therefore Laura didn’t expect the Fighting Bulls to treat the Herculean Bull captives this way, they were too cruel.

Zhao Hai sighed, “I now wholeheartedly support Brother Wales’s revenge, the Fighting Bulls were really too much. Forget it, let’s not talk about this anymore. I still have to serve breakfast, I’ll take a rest after then.”

Laura nodded, this was the first time that she experienced the brutality of wars in the prairie, a defeated tribe would have zero dignity left, they may even get exterminated.

Wales didn’t think that Zhao Hai would go out to serve breakfast. After breakfast, everyone returned to their tents, Wales told Zhao

Hai, “Little Hai, why didn’t you rest for a little more? You didn’t need to hurry along, not being able to eat breakfast isn’t a big deal.”

Zhao Hai just faintly smiled. “Well, I can rest later, the group still needs to get full, its no big deal, no need to say anything more. Right, I’ll go sleep now, don’t look for me today.”

Wales nodded, Zhao Hai then returned to his tent. Wales looked at Zhao Hai’s departing back and muttered to himself, “Feel relieved Little Hai, Elder Brother will make sure to succeed.”

When the sky was turning dark, Zhao Hai went out of the space, he had already rested well. But what Zhao Hai didn’t know was, while he was sleeping, the whole camp was very quiet.

In the evening, Zhao Hai gave the clansmen their dinner then went to the captives along with Kony. He gave out food as well as weapons to the captured Herculean Bulls. This was in preparation for tomorrow, where the attack would commence in the evening.

Zhao Hai and Kony told them the news of the attack tomorrow evening, advising them to get away from the camp before that time.

The night passed as the food was distributed, then Zhao Hai returned to the camp and gave the other group their breakfast, after which he rested.

What Kony didn’t know, was that when Zhao Hai gave food to the captives, he also included some life liquid to the soup given, this would help the recoveries of these people.

Because they needed to act tonight, instead of giving the food then, the clansmen were given an extra portion of mutton while they stayed and waited for the evening so that they wouldn’t get hungry.

During daytime, the camp was quiet, they wanted Zhao Hai to have a proper rest. They were also afraid of making loud noises

since it could alert the Fighting Bulls, fortunately, there were no reactions from the Fighting Bulls.

Perhaps in the entire prairie, only crazed people like the Herculean Bulls would take revenge at this time, nobody else would wage war in such terrible weather.

As the sky was slowly turning dark, the people at the Herculean Bull camp began to act. They stood quietly outside along with their mounts. Everyone was calmly watching Wales standing in the middle.

Wales looked at the moon up above the sky, after a few moments he turned to look at his clansmen, "My people, the time for revenge has come." After saying that, he dismounted from his mount and slowly walked towards the Herculean Bull's camp.

All the other Herculean Bulls also dismounted from their mounts. They remained silent, they didn't move too fast, afraid of making noise and alerting the Fighting Bulls. But in their eyes was a fierce gaze, they tightly clutched their own weapons as they bit their teeth together. The expression on their faces were indifferent, like solid rocks.

Zhao Hai and Laura were sitting inside Xenomorph's body, Yale was also inside and although there was tea inside, Yale didn't have the thought to drink right now. He had been paying attention to the camp's situation.

The Herculean Bulls were also familiar with the camp's surrounding terrain. They know every nook and cranny here because for thousands of years, they had resided here, they were born here, and would die here. But they never thought that one day they would be driven out from this place, and needed to fight to take it back.

The army very slowly approached the Fighting Bull encampment because of the snow on the ground, they also managed to sneak up because of this. Wales was at the front, followed by the young

warriors of the clan then the elders, the women, and finally the children.

Zhao Hai's undead army was also beside the group and was commanded by him alone as Wales couldn't command the undead.

As the camp was getting closer and closer, Wales movements became even more careful. Just about 500 meter away from the camp, Wales suddenly issued a warcry and rode his mount, then he rushed towards the camp. The others also rode their mounts and followed Wales on his charge.

They held their axes on one hand and a lit torch in the other. When they charged towards the camp, the place they chose to charge through was right at the center, where a huge tent was erected. One must know that the when it comes to understanding this camp, the Herculean Bulls were much more adept than the Fighting Bulls.

The Fighting Bulls were obviously alarmed, and the whole camp fell into panic. The Fighting Bulls didn't imagine that the Herculean Bulls would do their counterattack at this time. One must know that the Herculean Bull camp was just captured about two months ago, and the Fighting Bulls also pillaged the Herculean Bulls of all their commodities. They were thinking that the Herculean Bulls would be too preoccupied of surviving the winter and didn't think of their counterattack. This made the Fighting Bulls lower their guard, which gave Wales a huge advantage.

Wales', however, was very ready for this attack, they had brought rope, a flare, and their weapon. Two Herculean Bulls would collapse the tent by pulling it with ropes, and as the inhabitants ran out, what waited for them were axes.

In the entire camp, flames were rising from all directions. The scene almost resembled the day of Judgement. Zhao Hai didn't participate in the attack, he was at the side observing. He knew that at this time, Wales' wouldn't want him to intervene, their

enemies must only be dealt with by themselves.

At this time, there were two roars that can be heard inside the camp. Zhao Hai's face changed since he can hear that this roar can only be made by 9th rank experts.

This time, not far from the camp came a loud roar which was made by a 9th rank expert, a flare went up and Zhao Hai saw two bodies flying from the camp, one was a tall and large figure while the other one was noticeably smaller.

The former was the 9th rank expert of the Fighting Bull clan, while the latter was obviously a human 9th rank expert. Zhao Hai didn't expect that the Human expert actually didn't leave the Fighting Bull camp. It seems like there were errors from the information he got from Bell.

However, Zhao Hai didn't worry much since in addition to the Herculean Bull's 9th rank Supreme Elder, they had also invited two 9th rank experts from the Mastiffs to help them deal with the Fighting Bulls.

A 3 versus 2, this scenario was very advantageous for the Herculean Bulls.

Chapter 303 – The Chieftain Flees

A fight between 9th rank experts weren't only just decided by numbers. One should remember back then when two 9th rank Herculean Bull Supreme Elders were battling the 9th rank Fighting Bull expert and 9th rank Human expert, of the two Herculean Bulls, one died while the other was injured. Hence this time, nobody could be certain of the outcome.

In fact, if a 9th rank expert really wanted to survive, even though he was injured he can still escape while being attacked by two similarly ranked experts. Only when he was besieged by three can he be killed.

It was precisely for this reason that the Mastiffs sent two 9th ranks to help the Herculean Bulls. Only then can they truly exterminate the 9th rank expert of the Fighting Bulls.

But they didn't think that this time, someone would help the Fighting Bull 9th rank escape, for the Herculean Bulls, this was a dilemma. It wouldn't be good for the Herculean Bulls for these two if they were to escape, especially the 9th rank Fighting Bull. If he were to escape, it would be possible for the Fighting Bull clan to rise up again.

Thus, when Zhao Hai and Yale saw the two 9th ranks, their expressions sank. They clearly knew what this battle represented to the Herculean Bulls, if they were to leave some loose ends then it'll be troublesome in the future.

Yale's face changed, "Why is the 9th rank Human still here? This'll be troublesome."

Zhao Hai's expression was also very unpleasant, he said, "It does look troublesome, but I believe that my information was true. It seems that this expert just returned to the Fighting Bulls. Hmph, let him stay here forever then."

Yale sighed, “It wouldn’t be easy, the Fighting Bull Supreme elder’s strength is ordinary, just on par with the previous Supreme Elder before his breakthrough. This 9th rank Human, however, was very strong. He is a few steps more powerful than the Herculean Bull’s Supreme Elder, otherwise he wouldn’t be able to take down the other 9th rank Herculean Bull.”

Zhao Hai coldly snorted, “In the beginning, I actually didn’t plan to intervene, having a human meddle with a beastman’s battle would leave people ridiculing Big Brother. But it seems that it wouldn’t be good if I didn’t help.” Zhao Hai waved his hand and released Zhao Wen, then he asked her to deal with the 9th rank Human. Zhao Wen’s figure moved, then disappeared from inside Xenomorph.

Then Zhao Hai began releasing a large number of blood devouring mosquitoes, this would be the second time that he used these mosquitoes. The last time he released them was during the attack of West Wonder King’s army. This time, the mosquitoes role would be much more direct, they now would deal with the Fighting Bulls straight on.

Do not underestimate these small blood devouring mosquitoes, with enough numbers, they could become a fearful disaster on the Continent.

And in the dark night, these small blood devouring mosquitoes were like assassins, the people’s eyesight would be affected by the dark so defending against the mosquitoes at this time would be impossible.

Yale saw what Zhao Hai just did, he looked at Zhao Hai confused. After releasing all the mosquitoes, Zhao Hai turned to Yale, “Mister Yale, it’ll be okay now, I sent Little Wen to help Big Brother. Little Wen is also a 9th rank expert, a 9th rank magic beast expert, I believe she’ll be of help.”

Yale stared at Zhao Hai, shocked, “You mean you have a 9th rank

expert on hand? And she listens to your commands?” Yale wasn’t an idiot, he knew how strong 9th rank experts were. And he understood that the 9th rank expert that Zhao Hai meant was that crystal-like insect magic beast. But what he was surprised the most was, from Zhao Hai’s actions, it looked like he wasn’t interacting with a 9th rank expert, instead it looked like he was talking to a subordinate.

After Zhao Hai heard Yale’s questions, he faintly smiled and replied, “You could say that Zhao Wen listens to my commands, but she’s not a subordinate, she’s a family member.”

Yale was stunned by Zhao Hai, he knew what a 9th rank expert represents. In the Herculean Bull tribe, even in their highest peak, only had three 9th rank experts. On an average generation they would have two 9th ranks, and now that they were in a dire situation they had only one. And the influence of a 9th rank is higher than that of the chieftain, if the 9th rank had any opinions, the chieftain must listen to it.

However, Zhao Hai actually had a 9th rank expert that listens to his words, what did this mean? It meant that Zhao Hai could deploy a 9th rank expert anytime to get rid of an enemy. But he didn’t do so, only in troublesome times would he ask the 9th rank expert to make a move.

At this time, Wales already crashed into the camp. The Fighting Bulls were obviously ill-prepared, they were running around in panic, some people wanted to escape, some actually wanted to fight. But those who wanted to fight couldn’t find their mounts and those who wanted to escape couldn’t find their family members, this plunged the camp into confusion.

Under such circumstances, the Fighting Bulls weren’t able to organize themselves. However, Wales didn’t stay at the area. His goal was to make a huge move, to increase the morale of the Herculean Bulls. What he needed to do now was to target the morale of the enemy, once this was crushed, they would crumble.

The Fighting Bulls were in a chaotic state of disunity, on the other hand the Herculean Bulls were like a pointed knife. The sand cannot block a blade, Wales killed towards the Golden tent in the middle.

The golden tent quickly came into sight and Wales could see his enemy, the Fighting Bull chieftain. On the chieftain's side were about a thousand guards, completely in formation to defend.

Meeting his enemy and particularly enraged, Wales immediately roared and charged to kill the Fighting Bull chieftain. The Fighting Bull chieftain also saw Wales and a flash of fear was seen on his face, then replaced by a ruthless expression. The Fighting Bull chieftain brandished his scimitar then also started to charge towards Wales.

Following on his sides were the elites of the Fighting Bulls, on their hands were pure metal maces lace with gold that the Fighting Bulls made, they were more lethal compared to the scimitar that the chieftain wielded.

The cavalry of the two sides crashed together as though two floods colliding from different directions. With a bang, the two waves crashed onto each other, but instead of water splashing, severed limbs and blood were what came out.

The two sides had irreconcilable enmity with each other, but the morale of one of them was off the roof while the other was fighting desperately. The exhilaration from this battle was completely out of Wales' imagination.

Blocking Wales with only a thousand people was impossible, but the strengths of the chieftain and the elites were nothing to scoff at. The worst of them were at the 6th rank and the strongest had 8th rank strength, for such a thousand man group, their fighting strength would be astonishing.

When Wales' charge was suffering some setbacks, a commotion was happening on the left and right wings of the Fighting Bulls.

Amidst the chaos, Wales managed to take a glance at the commotion. He saw two groups of Fighting Bull cavalry attacking both sides and charging towards the Fighting Bull chieftain. Judging by how the two cavalries were moving, they seem to be Zhao Hai's undead. The two groups of cavalry totaled up to seven thousand warriors.

The undead cavalry charge was very difficult to stop. This was because they were not afraid of death, they were not afraid of injuries, they forwent defense and went full on attack. Such type of enemies were very terrifying in the battlefield.

Currently the Fighting Bull chieftain was very perplexed, he didn't understand why a group of Fighting Bull cavalry was attacking him. Moreover, these Fighting Bulls weren't afraid of death, he witnessed them being pounded off their mounts by maces, chests all broken to pieces but still crawled to attack, they were very scary.

The Fighting Bull chieftain was a smart person, his strength was only at the 7th rank, so he didn't go to the front lines to battle. But this time, fear had struck him, he felt that he may actually die in the hands of those monsters, so he immediately turned around to escape.

The chieftain escaping made his guards stare blankly. To the beastmen, escaping was a shameful act, it was precisely because of this that after managing to escape, the Herculean Bull's morale had hit rock bottom. This was because in their minds, they were cowards, shameful runaways.

But it was also because of this that when Wales mentioned taking revenge, they went all in just to wash away their shame. Initially, they ran away because they didn't have a commander, but now that they have one, even if they paid with their lives, they would reclaim their lost pride.

However, the Fighting Bull chieftain escaping was another

matter. He was a leader, it was an unspoken rule that everyone should be able to escape before the leader. Before, in this very camp, Wales' second brother Paul died while being surrounded by Fighting Bull cavalries. Even though he had no chance he still fought and died with his group in his charge. For the beastmen, this kind of person is worthy of respect, completely different to the Fighting Bull chieftain who was very shameful. He didn't only shame himself, but also the entire Fighting Bull tribe.

The guards looked at their chieftain, stunned, their faces full of disbelief, they didn't know what they were supposed to do.

While they were dumbfounded, the Undead Cavalry arrived, and immediately overwhelmed the group.

Wales looked at the escaping chieftain and quickly commanded, "The Fighting Bull chieftain escaped, don't let him, give chase!"

The guards at his side also shouted, "The Fighting Bull chieftain ran, don't let him escape, give chase!"

These words were very important, when the resisting Fighting Bulls heard this, they froze. They were in disbelief when they looked towards the golden tent, their chieftain's shadow was nowhere to be seen and their King's flag was also cut down to the ground.

Chapter 304 – Ultimate Weapon

For the beastmen, War flags were extremely important. Their War flag is the pride of their race, it was as important as their lives, a beastman would rather sacrifice his life than to let their war flag be discarded.

Now their most important War Flag has been cut down and fallen to the ground, the Fighting Bulls felt that the sky just collapsed, they had lost their motivation. Many Fighting Bulls could be seen giving up their resistance, they were just blankly standing there while they were hacked to death by Herculean Bulls. Some turned around and escaped towards the plains, but in such weather, as well as having nothing to bring, running to the prairie is akin to suicide.

Wales didn't think that the Fighting Bulls would be routed this quickly after only having fought for a few moments. Other Herculean Bulls immediately brandished their weapons and gave chase to the escaping Fighting Bulls.

Although this happened, the fighting still continued, there were still many Fighting Bulls resisting since the news of their chieftain escaping still hasn't reached their ears. They were resisting but were disorganized, it can only be seen as a futile struggle.

The fight continued on up until dawn, at this time the Fighting Bull resistance had become weak. While some Fighting Bulls ran away, their slaves actually didn't escape, it was very clear to them that they had no other place to go, so they might as well remain and keep on becoming slaves for the Herculean Bulls. The Herculean Bulls also didn't kill them, they were just slaves, it was just like they changed ownership.

Sure enough, just as the slaves thought, the Herculean Bulls didn't care for them at all. They just basically forgot about the slaves since they were preoccupied with chasing the Fighting Bulls.

As long as a Herculean Bull sees a Fighting Bull, no matter they were women or children, they killed entire families due to their extreme anger.

But what Wales didn't think of was the group of captive Fighting Bulls, when they were attacking the main camp, the captive group also went to intercept groups of fleeing Fighting Bulls. They would block the fleeing Fighting Bulls then immediately threw their hatchets towards them, hacking them to death. Then they would run towards the dead Fighting Bulls to retrieve their hatchets while looting the bodies of their weapons, after which they would move again to find another group. That evening, they managed to eliminate 30 groups of Fighting Bulls, both large and small. The total number of people they hunted reached ten thousand, which was never in Wales' expectations.

He thought that because these captives have suffered for many days, their body simply didn't have enough strength to fight. But he actually didn't think these elderly, women, and children would achieve such success, it was very commendable.

Wales knew that the reason why these people had their current fighting strength was because of Zhao Hai. He added life liquid to the mutton soup that the captives consumed, this made them recover quicker, some elderly even had more strength in them than before they were captured.

Zhao Hai didn't participate in the pursuit. He went to the place where the Fighting Bulls stored all their supplies and guarded it. He was afraid that some Fighting Bulls would come here and burn the supplies out of desperation.

Because of this decision, Zhao Hai didn't let the blood devouring mosquitoes kill the other Fighting Bulls but instead had them protect the storehouse. At the same time, Zhao Hai had his undead put out the fires in the camp as well as turning dead Fighting Bulls into undead.

When the evening passed, Zhao Hai has managed to turn three hundred thousand Fighting Bulls into undead.

Including women and children, the Fighting Bulls number about eight hundred thousand. And now three hundred thousand of these people had become undead, most of which where adult men and women, they were those who had taken up their weapons and resisted and became the primary targets of the Herculean Bulls.

One could imagine the scene of tragedy in this war, the ground of the camp was stained red. While sitting inside Xenomorph, Laura's face was pale.

Not out of Zhao Hai's expectations, attacks came from Fighting Bull deserters while he was defending the storehouses. In the entire evening he could count about a dozen attacks by the Fighting Bulls who wanted to burn the supplies, but in the end they did not succeed.

Yale was now in full admiration for Zhao Hai, while everyone was out pursuing the Fighting Bulls, Zhao Hai stayed behind to protect the very important storehouse. Now even if the entire camp were to be destroyed, they could still manage to rebuild it.

Dawn was when the camp had finally stopped fighting, there was no living Fighting Bull in sight. No matter young or old, nobody was spared, now Zhao Hai has about four hundred thousand undead. Even those escaping Fighting Bulls wouldn't be spared, they couldn't survive the upcoming weather.

Zhao Hai didn't went away. He went around the camp and continued to turn all Fighting Bulls into undead while waiting for Wales to return, he believed that Wales would return soon.

What he didn't expect was Wales continuing his pursuit of the fleeing Fighting Bulls for a full three days. In these three days, they depended entirely on milk wine. After expending the milk wine and having sobered up, the group then returned back to the camp.

Zhao Hai, however, took advantage of these three days to rebuild the old camp. Now, excluding Zhao Hai's undead, the near two hundred thousand Herculean Bull captives were also inside the camp. They didn't go after the Fighting Bulls since they didn't have any mounts to ride.

The captives received food from Zhao Hai so they already knew of him. Under Zhao Hai's command, they rebuilt the entire camp and gathered all dead Herculean Bulls to prepare for a mass burial.

The camp's ground had turned red, but since it was winter, it was very difficult to remove because the blood had become frozen. But it was also clear that the Herculean Bulls never planned to clean these bloodstains up, they just rebuilt their tents and cleaned the corpses of their clansmen.

When Wales returned to the camp, the place had been cleaned up properly except for the corpses and the blood. It looked like there was barely anything that happened here.

In the camp was a large cauldron, mutton, mutton soup and milk wine were ready. When Wales returned, he immediately drank some milk wine, ate some mutton and drank some steaming hot mutton soup.

Wales and the others were exhausted, after eating mutton and drinking soup, they immediately slept for axwhole day and night. At about the time they were waking up, Zhao Wen had also returned, she also had brought with her the corpse of the 9th rank Human expert.

After turning him into undead, Zhao Hai confirmed that he really was from the Radiant Church, an Ultimate Weapon that the Radiant Church had trained since childhood.

The Radiant Church had long been carrying out this Ultimate Weapon program. Their plan was to select some gifted children and gave them extreme training as well as some near-death experiences. These children's sole purpose were to become experts,

8th rank and 9th rank experts, those who couldn't meet this criteria were killed off.

Bringing up 9th ranks wasn't an easy task, thus after all these years, the program finally made three 9th ranks. But the amount of 8th ranks they've acquired reached several hundreds, this was also one of the pillars of the Church's strength.

This time's Fighting Bull helper was a 9th rank Ultimate Weapon that the Church had produced, and he was a Fire Mage. But he was still turned into an undead by Zhao Hai in the end, giving Zhao Hai's Staff fire element magics.

Now, Zhao Hai's Ghost Staff can do Light, Dark, Earth and Fire element magic. He only needs Water and Wind elements so that he can pretend to be an all around Mage.

Unfortunately, Zhao Hai didn't manage to get much intel from this person since he was only a weapon for the church. Who in their right minds would tell their plans to a mere tool? Weapons do not need to know so much, as long as they can kill then they are already fine.

And apparently his appearance in the Fighting Bulls this time was coincidental. This time he just came to inform the Fighting Bulls that the Herculean Bulls had fled towards the Mastiffs and to put pressure on the Mastiffs in order for them to not take in the Herculean Bulls. But he didn't expect that the Herculean Bulls would counterattack and was finally killed by Zhao Wen.

Also from Zhao Wen, Zhao Hai managed to know that the Supreme Elder of the Fighting Bulls was also slain by the joint forces of the Herculean Bull Supreme elder as well as the two Mastiff Supreme Elders. Wales can feel relieved.

Although Zhao Hai didn't manage to get many information, he still managed to get a significant lot. He knew that the Radiant Church had a minimum of five 9th rank experts, and this was without calculating the three 9th ranks that the Ultimate Weapon

program had produced. Only god knows how many 9th ranks the Radiant Church did have.

What was the most important was the number of their 8th rank experts, which reached several hundred. Even in the prairie, a tribe of near 1 million like the Fighting Bulls can only have a few numbers of 8th ranks, in the guard regiment of the eliminated Fighting Bull chieftain, although they had 8th rank experts, they only number in about a dozen, the others were 6th and 7th ranks. But from the undead, the Radiant Church seemed to have a few several hundred 8th ranks, this was a very fearful amount of strength.

While he was asking about these matters, Wales finally woke up. Zhao Hai immediately went to Wales' tent, Wales was chatting with Mendez inside while eating some mutton.

After seeing Zhao Hai come, Wales immediately welcomed him and laughed, "Little Hai, come quickly, Hahaha, this time we won, the Fighting Bull cannot recover anymore."

Looking at Wales' proud face, Zhao Hai's heart couldn't help but sink, "Brother, I have something to tell you."

Wales looked at Zhao Hai's expression and knew that this was an important matter, he quickly replied, "What's the matter? Sit down and eat while we talk."

Zhao Hai nodded and sat down, they immediately handed him some milk wine, mutton, and soup. Zhao Hai didn't touch the food but he talked, "First I had to say to Big Brother that the two 9th rank experts of the Fighting Bulls were killed, there would be no more threat from the Fighting Bulls."

Wales became ecstatic, since the Supreme Elder still hadn't come back, he still hadn't received this news. But he already knew from Yale that Zhao Hai had sent a 9th rank expert to enter the battle, so what Zhao Hai said couldn't be a mistake.

Zhao Hai looked at his happy face and added, “I’ve also determined that the Fighting Bull helper was indeed a 9th rank Fire element Mage of the Radiant Church. This time he only came to deliver a letter and has gotten caught up with out counterattack, the information we got before was not wrong.”

Wales nodded, then Zhao Hai continued, “The Radiant Church’s strength was completely out of my calculations. At present, they have a minimum of five 9th rank experts, they also have 8th ranks that number to several hundreds. Big Brother should be more careful in the future.”

Hearing what Zhao Hai said, Wales’ face couldn’t help but change. He looked at Zhao Hai and said, “Little Hai, is what you’re saying true?”

Zhao Hai nodded, “It couldn’t be wrong, I turned the 9th rank into an undead. He told me personally that the Radiant Church had started their Ultimate Weapon program about a dozen years ago. They selected a batch of children with good talents and gave them the strictest training since their childhood. Their goal was to turn these children into 9th rank experts, and if they were inadequate, they still could acquire 8th ranks. Those who couldn’t manage the training died, this way they had produced so many experts.”

Wales put down his glass, and with a serious voice he said, “Good, the Radiant Church is actually farsighted, good.”

Zhao Hai nodded and said, “But the Radiant Church wouldn’t dare send these people to the prairie, otherwise they would be killed. Now about the Fighting Bulls, I had managed to acquire four hundred thousand undead just from the camp. If we scour the prairie I’m sure that these numbers would only pile up. And adding the fact that their 9th rank expert died, the Fighting Bull’s threat has been majorly diminished.”

Wales nodded and smiled, he had already expected these

numbers. After all, they didn't capture any Fighting Bulls, all Fighting Bulls they've met were all killed.

Zhao Hai looked at Wales and said, "But Big Brother shouldn't be careless, since 2nd and 3rd sister had been rescued, West Wonder King would surely be more careful. And now that the Fighting Bull chieftain has been killed, his men may join the ranks of West Wonder King, making his strength increase. He also knew from the Fighting Bull refugees that the Herculean Bulls had returned so they may try to escape. If they manage to do so, there may come a time where they can find an opportunity to come back. Thus, Brother should charge towards West Wonder King as soon as possible, taking care of West Wonder King is the right thing to do.

Chapter 305 – A Splash of Cold Water

Zhao Hai's words were like a splash of cold water. It made Wales calm down from his happy attitude. Wales put down his wine glass and closed his eyes, after a few moments he opened his eyes and turned to Zhao Hai, "Little Hai, I need to thank you. This victory made me complacent, but fortunately you reminded me that we still have more things we need to do, we shouldn't be too proud."

After hearing Wales, Zhao Hai couldn't help but let out a long breath. This time when he approached Wales it was to first, persuade Wales, and the second was to see his attitude. If Wales listened to his advice, then it meant that he wasn't a person who let his victories go to his head, that he was a man of value, and Zhao Hai will help him as he did before.

But, if Wales didn't listen to his advice, then Wales wouldn't be someone significant, and Zhao Hai wouldn't help him anymore.

Fortunately Wales listened to his advice, he can now follow up with his words, he looked at Wales and said, "Brother, we need to quickly take care of West Wonder King, then deal with the other runaway Fighting Bulls. I'd like to hear brother's opinion, what do you want to do? Will you make sure that the Fighting Bulls will never rise again, or would you like to give them a trace of hope?"

Wales coldly snorted, "Trace of hope? Why would I give them a trace of hope? Didn't you see how they treated my clansmen? They were children and the elderly, but they actually thought of freezing them to death, and I still want to give them a trace of hope!?"

Hearing what Wales said, Zhao Hai nodded, "Good, there are a few more words that I need to tell big brother. After taking care of West Wonder King, you should report the collusion of the Fighting Bulls and the Radiant Church to the Warring clans, you should also tell them about the Radiant Church's Ultimate Weapon program. At the same time, you should spread the word across the prairie

that no matter which race, as long as they bring back a head of a Fighting Bull to the Herculean Bull camp, then they would be rewarded with a thousand jin of grain, for women and children it would be half, five hundred jin of grain.”

Wales and Yale’s bodies couldn’t help but shudder, to be honest, hunting the Fighting Bulls was very difficult. Even though there was a cooperation between the Radiant Church and the Fighting Bulls, the refugees can declare that it was their chieftain’s decision, and it didn’t have anything to do with them. But now, with Zhao Hai’s idea of trading grain for the head of Fighting Bulls, exterminating them would be possible, although extremely ruthless.

For the Beastmen, grain was too valuable, especially to the small tribes. If these small tribes meet some Fighting Bulls, they would never let go of this opportunity of getting grain. One could say that due to this announcement alone, the Fighting Bull tribe may even perish from the entire prairie.

Wales and Yale looked at Zhao Hai and cannot help but swallow their saliva, they hadn’t seen this ruthless side of Zhao Hai before.

Zhao Hai looked at the two people, “What’s the matter? Big Brother, we already have grain on hand, and on the storehouse there were more. Adding the Fighting Bull’s supply with ours, there would too many, so why shouldn’t we make use of these excess grain?”

Bang! Wales slammed his hand on the table, “Good, Little Hai is right, I have to make the Fighting Bulls disappear from the prairie. But I also wanted to make the Fighting Bulls into slaves and gift them to you, so this idea won’t work.”

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile, “You can just give those Fighting Bulls from West Wonder King’s camp to me as slaves, wouldn’t that work?”

Wales smiled, “Right, then it’s done, Sixth Brother, send my

orders, in three days we would march towards West Wonder King's camp. I want to take a look at that ungrateful West Wonder King, let's see how he will resist the might of our Herculean Bull army."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, he didn't say anything, to be honest he actually hadn't thought to be this ruthless towards the Fighting Bulls. But after he saw how they treated the Herculean Bull captives, he changed his mind. Additionally they were also in collusion with the Radiant Church, and the church was Zhao Hai's mortal enemy, so Zhao Hai couldn't possibly have any pity towards his enemies.

It has been a long time since he had arrived at the continent, he also slowly experienced many situations, his heart has slowly developed its ruthless side. He knew that if he were too kind to his enemies, then he would only be harming himself. So what he needed to do was to totally exterminate his enemies so save him future trouble.

Zhao Hai looked at Wales and asked, "Brother, what are our losses? Also how many supplies did we gain, how many argali, these had to be known, did you manage to calculate it?"

Without waiting for Wales to respond, Yale interjected, "I already had these listed. Before the family was attacked, we had a total population of 1,329,000 people. Now, our population has been reduced to about 800,000, but this is only the number of Herculean Bulls currently with us, I'm quite sure that there are still some Herculean Bulls out in the prairie that has yet to come back. They should come back if the message of our victory were to spread. From what I prophesized, our total population should be about one million, a total loss of about three hundred thousand from our original numbers. This time's battle, we didn't lose too much people, only ten thousand, many were elderly and children. Currently we were unable to count the exact number of our argali, since we didn't count how many argali we had in the beginning

and now adding the Fighting Bull's argali, the quantity was already too large, enough for our people to not worry for the next ten years. Our grain stores also can last us for five years. Lastly, the Fighting Bulls had left behind nearly five hundred thousand slaves. All in all, the amount of people we currently have in the camp amounts to about 1.3 million people."

Wales nodded, he wasn't surprised that they couldn't count their argali. Beastmen almost never count their argali one by one, typically they count it by groups. But when they trade with Humans, they actually wouldn't count the argali, they just do clashing.

What is clashing? When Humans trade with commodities, the beastmen would lead the humans to a flock of sheep then have their horsemen clash into the flock. How many argali your horseman can manage to herd would be the amount of argali that you would receive. Thus, if your horseman was good, then you would obtain many, but if your horseman was bad, then you couldn't complain if you only gained little.

But such trading method is only used by big tribes, this method would not be applicable to small tribes which have fewer argali. They need to count their argali when they trade, they cannot afford to do clashing.

This was also one reason why Humans were very willing to trade with beastmen, if they have someone with good riding skill, they can often obtain argali many folds more than their goods' value.

The reason why the beastmen were also more kind to their slaves was also these argali. For the big tribes, they needed slaves to herd their massive numbers of argali. Therefore, the big tribes would not count their argali individually but in herds. In the end, nobody actually would know exactly how many argali they had, but one can be sure that the big tribes' number of argali would reach tens of millions.

And now, on the Herculean Bull's hands were their original argali added by the Fighting Bulls' argali. This was akin to having two big tribes worth of argali, this quantity is beyond astonishing.

Zhao Hai nodded, "Currently I still have a lot of mutton and mutton soup, we can say we are safe for food this time. Brother, earlier I was kidding about handing West Wonder King's people to me as slaves. The Fighting Bulls can be considered to be one of the fiercest warriors among the Cow-headed race, it would be a pity if they were only to be used as slaves by me. If you really wanted to provide me with slaves, then just give me some ordinary slaves, the Fighting Bull slaves would be better if they were in your hands. It can also help you manage the entire Cow-headed race by increasing your fighting strength."

Wales knit his eyebrows, "As the matter stands, do we need to carry on the plan to trade Fighting Bull heads with grain we made before?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "Naturally. West Wonder King's people can be turned to captives or slaves, but those who had escaped don't need be treated politely. I also believe that no one in their right minds would come to the Herculean Bull camp to kill your slaves and trade them for grain, no?"

Wales laughed, to be honest, he also thought that giving the Fighting Bulls to Zhao Hai as slaves wouldn't be appropriate. The strength of the Fighting Bulls was formidable and they also had their issue with temper, handing them off to Zhao Hai would be troublesome for him. Wales didn't want to give annoyances to his brother Zhao Hai.

Adding onto what Zhao Hai said, the Fighting Bulls were still of the Cow-headed race, and there were only a few strong tribes inside the race, so if the Fighting Bulls were to be completely removed, then the impact would be huge for the Cow-headed race's overall fighting strength. Listening to Zhao Hai decline receiving the Fighting Bull slaves, Wales didn't have any objection,

on the contrary, Zhao Hai's importance was further raised deep inside his heart, almost everything was given to him by Zhao Hai.

The group still talked about the matters of the Herculean Bulls, so Zhao Hai returned to his tent. Since there were many missing people, or even dead, in the clan, they need to re-appoint some new managers for various areas. Because this was a Herculean Bull internal matter, even though Zhao Hai was their Crown Prince he was still a human, so he didn't want to meddle into things like these. He did not want the Herculean Bulls to think that he only helped them so that he could snatch power.

Zhao Hai returned to his tent. This tent was bigger and placed at the center area of the camp. Inside was a lit brazier making the tent very warm. This time Laura didn't need to wear thick clothes anymore.

Chapter 306 – Plan

Seeing Zhao Hai come back, Laura asked, “So what happened?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, “Big Brother wanted to march towards West Wonder King’s camp in three days. He also wanted to give the Fighting Bull captives to me as slaves, but I didn’t want them, I wanted slaves who had gentle tempers, too much temper is very inefficient for slaves, me having the Fighting Bulls would be inappropriate.”

Laura nodded, “I agree, the Fighting Bulls are famous to have a short tempers in the prairie. Even if they become our slaves, they would be a bit troublesome, it looks like big brother is looking after us.”

Zhao Hai smiled, “Brother thought about it very much, he wanted to extinguish the Fighting Bulls as well as make them our slaves, he really is very determined.”

Laura also smiled, “I’m afraid that of all the humans, we became the most busy in the prairie, but our profits is still sufficient.”

Zhao Hai replied, “Be relieved, our profits are also very big, no need to talk about this anymore. In three days we must prepare to head towards West Wonder King. This time may not be as big a battle. There’s less young and able people in West Wonder King’s camp, they shouldn’t be that daring to face big brother, but I also suspect that West Wonder King just won’t wait for his death, he may counterattack, but I just don’t know what kind of counterattack it would be.”

Laura smiled as she replied, “I’ll come with you, Big Brother Wales won’t even need to bring his army, how much undead did you have again? more then four hundred thousand? With those numbers, you could even establish your own tribe in the prairie. Even if Big Brother Wales ‘s tribe has a population of over a million, their army wouldn’t even be the same as yours, they could

also add their warrior slaves, but the undead in your command has more fighting prowess than general beastmen armies in the prairie.”

Laura was happy, not because of anything else but the fact that these undead can make the Iron Mountain Fort’s protection stronger. Zhao Hai can make these undead protect Iron Mountain. With an average power level of 7th ranks, even if Zhao Hai wants to rampage around Aksu Empire, it’ll certainly be possible.

Naturally, Zhao Hai wouldn’t do so, if he actually dared, he would become the enemy of everyone in the entire continent. When that time comes, he really wouldn’t have anywhere to take shelter.

Zhao Hai smiled, then sighs, “This time, when we travel to West Wonder King’s camp, I wonder what expression Beta would wear?”

Laura also sighed, although they aren’t in agreement with West Wonder King, they had to accept the fact that they were still friends with Beta. In that case, it would be very awkward for them to meet Beta during that time.”

Meg suddenly said, “Master, if everything here is settled, we should return to Iron Mountain Fort, I really couldn’t take the winter here.”

Zhao Hai thought for a moment, then nodded, “We should go back, winter in the prairie isn’t short, a bit more than three months. We’ll return to Iron Mountain Fort then head towards Rosen Empire during this time period. It would be best to set-up a supply station there so that when we return to the prairie in the spring, we can set-up our own trade route in the Rosen Empire. We could exchange our traded goods with Rosen empire currency. Moreover, since the beastmen in the prairie needed many commodities, we could acquire them in the empire. They could be said to be the most powerful nation in the continent, so we should

have all we need there.”

Laura agreed, “Of course, the largest supply market in the continent is their Imperial capital after all, Carson City. There were even rumors that as long as you are looking for something in the continent, then it would certainly be in Carson City.”

Zhao Hai smiled, “Wouldn’t that be better? When the time comes, if we have anything to sell, then nobody would pay attention. But this time, we should change our way of doing things. It would be best to have some cooperation with people of high position inside Rosen Empire, so that people wouldn’t dare mess with us, so that what happened in the Purcell Duchy wouldn’t be repeated.”

Laura nodded, “I agree with Brother Hai’s words, we won’t need to worry about the matters of the Radiant Church while in the empire. But some powerful people may also be able to kick us out of the empire, thus we need to find someone of significant power. We must make sure that what happened with Purcell Duchy wouldn’t happen again.”

Zhao Hai replied, “We first need to head to Rosen Empire’s Carson City to take a look at the situation, have a good understanding of the high positions in the empire, then we decide to whom we should cooperate with.”

Laura smiled, “Brother Hai, I just had a thought, the next time we see Bell, we should ask him if he has some connections in the Rosen Empire, what do you think?”

Zhao Hai’s eyes lit up, “I didn’t think of that, good, we can ask Bell, I’m are also a member of the League of Black Mages. The league’s influence isn’t small, perhaps they may have some connections inside Carson City.”

The group talked about more topics, then they returned to Iron Mountain Fort and told what they agreed on to Green. Green was

also in agreement with Zhao Hai's plan. This time, winter had finally arrived on the Black Wasteland, the weather outside the castle was very cold, fortunately Cai'er managed to make the castle warm. Several production lines in the castle were still in full operation, they already had many milk wine stored up, wool production had also started, ration department had also started creating rations, all departments were on track.

Zhao Hai was relieved, but they still wanted to expand the fort. Only then they could add more production factories, making the scale of operation bigger. With the current size of the Fort, all of these couldn't fit in.

Unfortunately, it was a pity that they had no skilled masons among them, otherwise they would be able to mine stones from the mountain and expand the fort.

The Iron Mountains behind the fort were almost hollowed out by the dwarves, no stone could be farmed, there were even plenty of dangers present. So if they wanted to find some stones to expand the fort, they can go to other parts, after all, the mountains were not small. But they still lack qualified masons, they couldn't perform large scale mining without having one.

However, it was also obvious that it was not the season to expand Iron Mountain Fort as it was winter. There was nobody outside at this time, so Zhao Hai decided to wait till next year.

Three days passed by in a blink of an eye, Wales dispatched his troops to march towards West Wonder King's camp. The Herculean Bulls moved, better prepared than before, they carried a lot of commodities this time, unlike before where they were lacking in supplies.

The tents were already taken care of by Zhao Hai, so they don't need to worry. They just needed to prepare their weapons and other equipment.

Of course the entire tribe didn't move, Wales left behind fifty thousand garrison troops in the camp, he also left some weapons for the elderly and women, just in case they might enter a battle.

This time, Wales brought one hundred and fifty thousand Herculean Bull soldiers, as well as one hundred thousand slave warriors.

The Herculean Bull's slaves were mainly composed of half-beastman, half-human slaves. For a clan like the Herculean Bulls, it would be impossible to have their own dedicated slave race, they still weren't qualified.

These half-beastmen slaves that Wales brought were the children between humans and Beastmen. These offsprings did not grow beast heads like the beastmen, instead, they had incomplete forms, their head would be human but they would look much like beastmen. For example, a half-rabbit beastman would grow a rabbit nose, or grow long ears, beside these qualities, they would have a human form.

These half-beastmen race's physical conditions were better than humans, but worse than beastmen. Thus they could only be recognized as a slave race inside the prairie, they were basically born to be slaves.

When the Herculean Bull warriors saw that Zhao Hai would accompany them, they immediately cheered. They liked to go to battle with Zhao Hai as they didn't need to worry about logistics, they immediately hurried along and formed their lines.

These half-beastmen didn't know of this, so they were obviously puzzled as to why the Herculean Bulls cheered for Zhao Hai, they didn't know what it means.

But they soon understood, since from the Herculean Bull camp to West Wonder King's camp would take about seven days. Adding on to the fact that it was winter and would experience snowstorms,

their advance would be slow.

Therefore, this time, it would take about ten days to reach there. Fortunately, they had managed to perform this march with Zhao Hai before, so they were advancing forward constantly without much accident.

Along the way, Zhao Hai and the group would encounter Fighting Bulls who were killed or had frozen to death. One could clearly see that the damage to the Fighting Bulls this time was quite serious.

Zhao Hai released blood hawks to survey around using the Herculean Bull camp as the center. All around the camp he could see corpses of Fighting Bulls, reaching about a hundred thousand. These corpses were mostly killed, a few froze to death. In total, the overall Fighting Bull corpses he had acquired numbered to around six hundred thousand, but the population of the Fighting Bulls was eight hundred thousand, their numbers had been reduced drastically.

Seeing such result, Zhao Hai was helpless. If it were not winter, the Fighting Bull losses wouldn't have been that many. They could, at most, lose about five hundred thousand people, saving about a hundred thousand, this was because of the six hundred thousand corpses he acquired, one hundred thousand were those who froze to death.

Zhao Hai couldn't do anything about this, this was war. After their fifth day of their march, Wales became alert, not for anything else but because they had met demon wolves.

Chapter 307 – Hidden Battle

The prairie's demon wolves were universally recognized as a disaster among beastmen, especially during the winter. In the winter, when the beastmen weren't out herding, the wolves' method of acquiring food became scarce, therefore they would form huge packs and attack some small tribes, causing massive damage.

This wolf pack that Zhao Hai's group met was quite a large one, about a hundred thousand wolves. Each wolf was evidently very thin, their eyes emitted a fierce green light. One could see at a glance that they had been starved for a very long time, anyone that hungry was very dangerous as they would go and attack any life form they could see.

Seeing this group of hungry wolves, Wales immediately became alert, moving forward cautiously. During the night while they would sleep, Wales wanted someone to take watch, but instead Zhao Hai sent his undead to act as sentries.

In fact, Zhao Hai wasn't just simply having his undead as sentries, he's actually planning to exterminate the wolves. Presently, Zhao Hai can see that in the wolf pack, there were different kinds of wolves mixed in. Zhao Hai wanted to catch these wolves and see if they would be able to make the Ranch level up, he would be satisfied if the Ranch could be upgraded.

In the evening when Wales and the other rested, Zhao Hai immediately had Cai'er come out and release some toxic gas into the camp. The potency of the toxic gas was very low, just enough to make beastmen unconscious, not doing any other damage. After doing so, Zhao Hai continued on to deal with the demon wolves.

Zhao Hai released all the undead that he had acquired and had them encircle the wolves. Although these wolves were strong, the cannot match up against six hundred thousand undead, moreover

they were encircled, all chances of escape had disappeared. In the end, Zhao Hai managed to eliminate the wolves, while capturing some.

All it took was three hours, after taking care of the wolves, Zhao Hai immediately sent them towards the Space's Ranch.

Inside the Ranch, a voice prompt could be heard: "Wolf variant animal detected, Level 25, Animal Maturing time, 20 hours. May give birth five times, each time produces five cubs, Consumes two feed per hour. Converting animal to data.... Can now be purchased in the shop."

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.....

Seeing five same prompts made Zhao Hai confused, he didn't know why. He immediately went to take a look at the store and saw five pictures of wolf-shaped animals.

Zhao Hai now understands, even though these wolves were collectively labelled as demon wolves, they were also divided into many breeds, and the Space seemed to see different breeds as new animals, which was to Zhao Hai's advantage.

At this time, a prompt could be heard again: "Wolf variant animal, aggressive creature, listed as pest, added to space as a pest and can be released to destroy enemies."

"Space Ranch has met Level Up requirements, upgraded to Level 8, looking forward to the host's further efforts."

Zhao Hai was surprised, the space upgrading wasn't anything new, but what were these pests? He was confused.

He immediately asked Cai'er, pests turned out to be an original

function of the farming space. Originally, the Space can send some wild animals to the Space of a friend to destroy their crops and gain some experience. But now that the Space had been integrated with Zhao Hai, and there were also no friends' farms around to send his wild animals to. Thus, this function has been transformed into a release pests function, and these demon wolves had been classified as pests, so the function had been unlocked.

Zhao Hai was ecstatic, this function was too formidable. He saw this development as a good sign, the Ranch had just upgraded to Level 8. He now hoped that the Ranch could reach Level 10 soon, he wanted to look at the perks that Level 10 could provide.

Most importantly, he just didn't achieve Ranch level-up, he also acquired about a hundred thousand wolf's meat, skin, and bones, these were valuable things.

Zhao Hai's face was very happy while exiting the Space, he didn't think that his gains would be too great, the release pests function, hahaha, this would be his special weapon. The Space was too black-bellied, completely in line with Zhao Hai's character.

The next morning, Wales and the others woke up, they felt that their sleep wasn't very good. After getting up, they felt very drained.

However, after having served Zhao Hai's breakfast they immediately recovered their strength. Zhao Hai knew that they were poisoned, although not very potent, it still had some effect. Zhao Hai therefore added some life liquid to the mutton soup he served, not only to remove the poison, but also to completely recover their strength.

When they started to move, Wales suddenly felt something wrong, there seemed to be some traces of battle on the plains around them, as well as the obvious disappearance of the wolves. Wales immediately concluded that this must be Zhao Ha's doing, the entire evening, he must have taken care of the wolves.

Regarding Zhao Hai's move, Wales was grateful, he was clear about the strength of these demon wolves. Even if they couldn't compare to the Herculean Bull's strength, facing a hundred thousand would certainly bring losses.

Having losses before arriving at West Wonder King's camp wasn't desirable for Wales, as this would have an impact on his men's morale. But Zhao Hai had already taken care of it, saving them from this crisis.

The Herculean Bulls moved along the road again. This time, the slaves were looking at Zhao Hai as though he was the Beast God, their adoration for him had already surpassed Wales.

During the next few days, they didn't encounter anything special, but they had come across some corpses of Fighting Bulls. One could see from these corpses that they had been attacked by demon wolves, except for a few large bones, the small bones were completely consumed, showing the demon wolves' fierceness.

Being left with only a few bones, Zhao Hai had no way of turning these corpses into undead. Magic was not omnipotent, in order to revive a corpse into undead, there were also several conditions, having a full corpse was one of the basic requirements.

Zhao Hai couldn't revive these corpses, and Wales was unable to apply his hatred on these pieces of corpses.

After five days, West Wonder King's camp came into view, Wales slowed down. They carefully observed West Wonder King's camp, the large camp was very calm, there were no commotions.

Wales saw that the skies had begun to turn dark, so they stopped and prepared to meet West Wonder King tomorrow.

The night passed silently, Zhao Hai was worried that West Wonder King might launch a night attack. He thought that West Wonder King should now be aware of the Herculean Bull's counterattack. In this case, they should have been preparing, and

now that the Herculean Bulls had come close the West Wonder King's camp, seeing that West Wonder King was weaker, then the only chance that they could do against the Herculean Bulls would be a night attack, only then would they have any chance of defeating the Herculean Bulls.

But now, there weren't any movements coming from West Wonder King's camp, as if there wasn't anything wrong, this made Zhao Hai puzzled.

Zhao Hai found Wales and went to discuss this matter with him, Wales and the others were also puzzled. Now they were suspecting that the escapees didn't come to West Wonder King's camp to seek refuge, thus West Wonder King had no idea of what happened.

Early the next morning, after eating breakfast, Zhao Hai stored their tents and they immediately went towards West Wonder King's camp. When they were about five li away from the camp, a commotion happened inside the camp, then a cavalry unit rushed out.

Wales didn't stop and instead he continued advancing, but all of them already took out their huge axes, soon the two cavalries met.

Wales looked at the person leading the opposing group which turned out to be West Wonder King. West Wonder King was wearing his iron armor, and underneath this armor, he was wearing cotton clothes.

West Wonder King looked at Wales, he looked stunned for a moment then looked at the army behind Wales. His brow furrowed a little, he then went forward and gave a salute, "West Wonder King has seen Prince Wales."

Wales looked at West Wonder King and said, "West Wonder, I'm now the Herculean Bull chieftain. At the same time, I also wanted to tell you good news. We had already defeated the Fighting Bull clan and reclaimed our camp, now the Fighting Bulls have fallen. Do you have anything to say?"

West Wonder King looked at Wales calm face and replied, “I have seen the chieftain, West Wonder has been preparing to help. But I didn’t think that the chieftain didn’t need West Wonder to defeat that thieving Fighting Bull chieftain, West Wonder’s heart is very happy.”

Wales looked at West Wonder King, he didn’t think that West Wonder King was this shameless, saying blatant lies to his face while acting honorable.

Wales laughed madly and replied, “You said you wanted to help me? HAHAAHA! Help me? Help me by reducing my sisters to slaves? I really must give my gratitude to you.”

West Wonder King’s expression changed, “My king, if I didn’t do that at that time, the Fighting Bull chieftain wouldn’t definitely let me off. I wanted to save my fighting power for my king, so I did so. Please forgive my sins, my king.”

Wales suddenly laughed, he calmly looked at West Wonder, “Really?”

West Wonder King quickly replied, “West Wonder does not dare lie.”

Wales nodded, then said, “West Wonder you are right, it seems that I have wronged you. Right, these few days, were there any Fighting Bulls that sought refuge with you?”

West Wonder King immediately shook his head, “No, we didn’t see any Fighting Bull escapees. It was because of this that I had no news of what happened to your old camp. If I knew, I would’ve helped out, my king can rest assured.”

Wales seemed to believe West Wonder King’s words, he nodded and waved his hand, “Good, I’ll take your word for it.”

Zhao Hai didn’t go out of the carriage, he strangely looked at Wales and West Wonder King. Presently, West Wonder King sees that Wales had believed him and his eyes were flashing with

happiness. But Wales' eyes were actually gloomy, Zhao Hai had a very clear understanding of Wales, those gloomy eyes were absolutely not calmness, Wales was hiding his anger deep down his heart.

To Zhao Hai, the present matter was getting more and more interesting. He knew that West Wonder King already knew what happened a long time ago, with his current actions, he must have thought about counterattacking.

Wales had also thought about this for a long time, so while he was just pretending to believe West Wonder King, in fact, he was also carrying his own plans.

It was too interesting, this hidden battle between the two people which began even before they had met. Zhao Hai can imagine that the earlier commotion inside the camp was also orchestrated to confuse them.

Now Zhao Hai wanted to see what the two would do next. Soon, the group arrived outside West Wonder King's camp. Zhao Hai observed something different with West Wonder King's camp, the tents were too close to each other and there was no place for an army to take rest. Zhao Hai remembered the last time he was inside West Wonder King's camp, didn't the camp look different than this?

But he immediately knew what West Wonder King wanted to do. West Wonder King looked at Wales embarrassingly, "My king, because of the snowstorm a few days ago, our tent arrangement had become dense. Your army wouldn't have any way to pass through, I can only ask my king's army to rest right beside the camp."

Wales showed a faint smile, "West Wonder is too polite, no need to get troubled over it. I'll have the army rest outside the camp first." After saying that, he waved his hand and called Kony over. He whispered a few orders to Kony's ear, Kony nodded and

commanded, “Rest here.”

The Herculean Bull cavalry was unable to understand Wales’ instructions, but they still stopped. At this time, Wales turned to Zhao Hai’s carriage and said, “Little Hai, come with Big Brother to rest inside West Wonder King’s camp.”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and opened the carriage door. He walked out and bowed, “Zhao Hai has met West Wonder King.”

After seeing Zhao Hai, West Wonder King’s expression worsened. He had not seen Zhao Hai carriage before, especially Zhao Hai’s personal carriage. When he saw that a King’s War Flag was inserted into the carriage, he thought that Mendez or Yale would be inside. Never in a thousand years did he expect that Zhao Hai would be sitting inside.

Chapter 308 – Such an Idiot

Seeing Zhao Hai smiling, West Wonder King was struck silly, his impression of Zhao Hai was very deep since Zhao Hai had traded them food for a cheap price. He just didn't think that out of all people, he would see Zhao Hai here.

Immediately West Wonder King understood who rescued Wales' sisters, he didn't think that Zhao Hai would be that capable.

However, he was also too deep into his plans, West Wonder King immediately said, "It turned out to be Mr Zhao, I didn't expect to see mister soon, has mister been well?"

Zhao Hai smiled, "I'm quite fine, the prince had taken care of me well."

At this time, Wales interjected, "West Wonder, Zhao Hai is the Crown Prince of the Herculean Bulls, you should address him as His Highness next time."

West Wonder King's complexion changed, he didn't expect that Zhao Hai turned out to be the Herculean Bull's Crown Prince, he looked at Wales, confused, "My king, you said that Mr. Zhao was the Crown Prince?"

Wales smiled faintly and said, "Zhao Hai is my Beheading Blood Oath brother, why can't he be the Herculean Bull clan's Crown Prince? West Wonder, do you expect me to stand here forever?"

West Wonder King bowed as an apology, but deep inside his eyes was a look of anger. He was irritated with Wales' arrogant attitude.

Wales and Zhao Hai, along with a hundred guards entered West Wonder King's camp. They seemed to have a complete trust of West Wonder King and didn't suspect him a little bit.

Wales had already met West Wonder King before, their relationship had been good and Wales didn't have any discontent with him. So in the eyes of West Wonder King, his lowered

attitude today wouldn't be seen as strange, Wales shouldn't be more wary of him than normal.

He didn't think that his image in Wales' and the Herculean Bull's minds already wasn't clean. Wales already had a strong vigilance against West Wonder King. His actions today was only to make West Wonder King continue on with his play. And Wales wasn't any bit worried with Zhao Hai by his side, the number of undead under Zhao Hai's command had already reached hundreds of thousands, plus he also has a 9th rank expert, so what else could threaten him?

Naturally, West Wonder King had no idea, he was thinking that his plans were a success. He had lured Wales to his tent while leaving his army behind, this meant that Wales already fell into his hands.

The group quickly entered West Wonder King's tent, the tent had been set up magnificently, the desk had been removed and has been replaced by small tables. In the middle of the tent was a brazier cooking mutton. Milk wine had also been placed at the sides of the small tables, Fighting Bull women were present specifically for pouring liquor.

West Wonder King and the group sat down, the Fighting Bull women immediately arrived at their sides and served them liquor, the liquor was warm, just right for the current weather.

West Wonder King took up his wine glass and said to Wales, "My king, your arrival had made this West Wonder happy, please take a drink of this wine that I prepared with cordiality."

Wales and Zhao Hai also held the wine glasses up, then drained their glasses dry. West Wonder King watched as the two of them drank their wines, his eyes turned happy and his focus became sharp.

As the liquor reached Zhao Hai's stomach, a prompt from the space could be heard, "Toxic substance detected inside host's body,

the toxin's potency is low, suggested that the Host drink Spatial Water to detoxify."

Zhao Hai was surprised for a moment, then understood the West Wonder King had put poison inside the wine. Zhao Hai couldn't help but smile, he had the Space, it could be said that he had an immunity to a hundred poisons, to poison him, interesting.

He put the wine glass down slowly the turned to West Wonder King and smiled, "Seeing West Wonder King today made this one happy, I had prepared a bottle of Fruit Wine, I ask the prince to taste." His hand turned and a bottle of Fruit Wine appeared.

West Wonder King didn't suspect him, he immediately replied, "Good, His Highness' wine also gives West Wonder pleasure." After he said that, a Fighting Bull woman went to serve them the wine.

West Wonder King took a moment to observe the bottle of wine, seeing that the bottle was completely sealed and didn't have any traces of being opened, he was relieved.

West Wonder King had frequent contacts with Human merchants, he also drank a lot of their wines, so he could see at a glance whether the bottle was tempered with or not. And if the wine has been opened, then it meant that there was something wrong with the wine bottle, and he wouldn't dare to consume it.

Wales didn't understand what Zhao Hai's actions meant, he looked puzzlingly at Zhao Hai. Seeing Wales appearance, Zhao Hai showed a faint smile and his eye turned towards the wine glass, Wales immediately understood and a never before seen anger filled his eyes.

Contained in this bottle was life liquid added by Zhao Hai, he was now more skillful in using the Space, as long as it was inside the Space's range, he can direct poison to anything without worrying that he may tamper with it, after all the Space itself can make space cracks, of course, applying life liquid also works.

After the women opened the bottle, they first gave a glass to Wales, then to Zhao Hai and finally to West Wonder King. The three then raised the glasses to drink.

After Wales placed his wine glass down, he looked at West Wonder King with a faint smile on his face, “West Wonder, you’re hesitating, or are you waiting for something? We have already been here for quite a long time, when are you gonna make your move?”

West Wonder King stared, his face changed, he looked at Wales and said with a serious voice, “My king, what do you mean?”

Wales smiled faintly, “You’re not convinced, why someone so young Herculean Bull like me would be the chieftain of the entire Cow-headed race, and I’m also sure you also had met Fighting Bull refugees from the old camp. You’re just holding up, acting, you want to lure me in your tent while leaving my army outside so that my life would be in your hands. I have already followed the script to your play, I went to your tent, I even obediently drank the poisoned wine you prepared for me, so why are you still acting? Are you waiting for something?”

West Wonder King listened to Wales’ words, he didn’t think that Wales would guess his plans correctly, he looked at Wales contemptuously, he could not bear to see Wales’ face anymore, he replied to Wales with a fierce tone, “You know all of these but still followed? Are you an idiot?”

This time Wales laughed, “Why do you still have such stupid ideas? Do you think I’ll just follow you without confidence in myself? If I did not confirm that this wine won’t be a threat to me, would I still drink it? West Wonder, West Wonder, it seemed that my father had a very high vision of you, you are nothing but an idiot. No wonder that even with our help, you still can’t take care of the Fighting Bull chieftain, eventually giving him the opportunity to attack our camp. But you really are an idiot by siding yourself with the Fighting Bull chieftain, you didn’t think

that since you rebelled before, the Fighting Bull chieftain would just forget? It surprises me that a person as stupid as you could still live till now.”

West Wonder King looked at Wales and sneered, “So what if you knew, can you detoxify it? Let me tell you the truth, that poison was the same on that killed your father, hahaha. When your old camp was reclaimed, someone found me and told me the news. It was his plan for the Fighting Bulls to usurp the Herculean Bull’s throne and now you had been doomed by his hand, he is an enemy of the Herculean Bulls.”

Wales’ eyes lit up with a cold gaze, “Did he? Then please let him come out and let me see his face.”

West Wonder King showed a smile then said, “Invite Mister Bowman in.” After his voice sounded, a person entered from the outside. Zhao Hai and Wales stared at the person and thought that he must be a Human, but they didn’t actually think that the person was a pure beastman, a Herculean Bull.

Wales didn’t expect the opposite party to be a Herculean Bull, he was stunned, and looked confused at Bowman, he can absolutely be sure that he didn’t see Bowman before, he didn’t know who he was.

Although Bowman was a Herculean Bull, his posture isn’t as tall as other Herculean Bulls nor did he look physically strong. He wore a white magic gown, with a look of a cultured and well-mannered man, he seemed to be a Light Element Mage.

Bowman looked at Wales, he smiled faintly and bowed, “Bowman has met Chieftain Wales, has Chieftain Wales been well?”

Wales looked at Bowman, confused, he asked, “Are you a Herculean Bull?”

Bowman smiled, “It is proper to say that I am a Herculean Bull orphan that was adopted by a human, the Radiant Church gave me

everything, I devote my entire life to the Radiant God.”

As Bowman said his words, Zhao Hai couldn't help but pat his own head and said, “Another brainwashed idiot, no wonder he would plan such a thing.”

Bowman stared at Zhao Hai, “Sinner, you dare slander the church!? You will be punished by the Radiant God.”

Zhao Hai chuckled and said, “Oh really, your god will punish me? Back in the human domain he couldn't, now that I'm in the prairie how would he do that, how? Oh right, do you want to see your friends?” Zhao Hai waved his hand, at his side two people appeared. One of them was Lindsay Becker, which was the white-robe Bishop that Zhao Hai made into an undead, whose father was a red-robed Archbishop. The other also wearing a similar robe but red in color, he was that 9th rank expert that Zhao Wen defeated, the Radiant Church's Fire Element Ultimate Weapon, Rhein.

Chapter 309 – An Idiot Who Can't Distinguish Good and Evil

Bowman naturally recognized Rhine, in fact, the matter regarding the Fighting Bulls and Herculean Bulls was entirely the work of the two.

Bowman also knew that Rhine was already defeated, but what he didn't expect was seeing Rhine in this situation. This time, Rhine wasn't his companion but instead a revived undead.

As for Lindsey Becker, he wasn't familiar with him, but when he looked at Lindsey Becker's robes, he knew that he was from the Radiant Church. Bowman didn't understand how Zhao Hai managed to turn a White Mage into an undead.

Zhao Hai saw Bowman's appearance, he smiled faintly, "You two, say hello to mister Bowman, you and him used to be on the same side, but I think he would soon be like you."

All present in the tent understood what Zhao Hai's words meant, West Wonder King also came to know that Zhao Hai was unexpectedly a Dark Mage.

Thinking that Zhao Hai was a Dark Mage, West Wonder King felt very fearful and tensed, to think that he drank a cup of a Dark Magician's liquor. West Wonder King felt that this was the biggest mistake he made in his entire life.

Rhine looked at Bowman's eyes, then calmly said, "Hello Bowman, I didn't think that you actually stayed." Rhine was a superior undead, in addition to becoming undead and having an unwavering loyalty for Zhao Hai, he was also capable of his own thoughts.

Bowman was not convinced, he ignored Rhine and turned to Zhao Hai, "No need for this acting, he does not possess the ability to think, a devil like you had controlled his mind to possess wicked

thoughts, you cannot deceive me.”

Zhao Hai smiled and replied, “I cannot control his mind, he has his own thoughts and knows every single conversation between you and him before. You can ask him if you don’t believe me, if he knows what color underwear you’re wearing before, he’ll certainly still remember now.”

Wales couldn’t help himself as he laughed. Zhao Hai just smiled and looked at Bowman, “Do you also know this gentleman?”

He referred to Lindsey Becker, Bowman shook his head and replied, “Who knows, maybe you just found a White Robe and placed it on some random undead to pretend being a Bishop.”

Zhao Hai faintly smiled and said, “He isn’t any small figure as well, he is called Lindsey Becker, you may not have heard of his name, but you may have heard of his father, Lundi Becker, an Archbishop of the Radiant Church. This is Lundi’s son, Lindsey Becker.”

Bowman paused for a moment, of course he knew about Lundi Becker, in fact, there was nobody in the Radiant Church who hadn’t heard of his name. Besides the Pontiff, he was the most influential Red-robed bishop, if you didn’t know of this person, then you didn’t need to belong to the Radiant Church.

Zhao Hai looked at Bowman’s expression, he couldn’t help but be amused, “So? Have you heard his name? Back in the continent, Lindsey wanted to attack me, but I can only apologize because he failed, so he became like this. So do you think your god can do anything to me? Forget it, and now you use poison? Haha, too laughable, you think that as a Herculean Bull, you are an orphan just because they said you are an orphan? I’m quite confident that the Radiant Church had kidnapped you instead. Did you think that a Beastman can just join the Radiant Church’s inner circle? Too stupid, you’re clearly brainwashed by the religion. I actually praise you, for being an idiot that couldn’t distinguish from good and

evil.”

Wales and West Wonder King didn't know that Zhao Hai's wanted status in the human domain had something to do with the Radiant Church, especially Wales, Zhao Hai had only told him that his name couldn't be exposed while inside human territories, it seems like what he said was correct.

Although Wales and West Wonder King couldn't be considered as high-level members within the beastman race, there would be no problem classifying them as intermediate-level. Therefore they were privy to some information about the Radiant Church's influence among the humans. Seeing that Zhao Hai had turned a Red-robed archbishop's son into an undead, they understood why he could not stay within the human domain.

Zhao Hai looked at Bowman's flushed face, it wasn't that Bowman was shamed, but he was instead angry. Just like Zhao Hai said, he was already brainwashed to the point of being unable to distinguish between good or evil, so how could he believe Zhao Hai's words? In his mind, Zhao Hai was the devil, and a devil naturally wouldn't say good things about the Radiant god.

Zhao Hai looked at Bowman and said, “It seems that you're still not convinced when I said the you cannot tell between good or evil, then I'll ask you. When the Radiant Church sent you to the prairie to deal with the Herculean Bull clan, surely you would've observed the Herculean Bulls? Moreover, since they didn't make you start your plans immediately, then surely you had lived together with the Herculean Bulls, then made your plans slowly. Did you see the Herculean Bulls treat the other cow-headed beastmen unfairly? Did you see that the Herculean Bulls were the type of clan that would wholeheartedly exterminate any race? Even if you were brainwashed by the Radiant Church, surely you still had some ability to think for yourself? Or did you already become a puppet?”

Zhao Hai's words were like a sharp blade that stabbed directly at

Bowman's heart. In fact, Bowman had been in the prairie for quite some time, and he also had developed some suspicions of the Radiant Church's view of the prairie. However, after years of being brainwashed, he had already acquired the style of taking orders without questions. Therefore, even though the beastmen race were different from what he had heard, he still valued the church's commands.

Hearing what Zhao Hai said had brought the doubts that he had hidden on the depths of his heart, therefore he became angrier, angrier at Zhao Hai and also himself.

He hated himself for doubting what the church had said, he only became what he is because of the church but now he had actually listened to the enemy and brought doubts to his heart. He felt that he had betrayed the church, so naturally he felt so enraged.

However, he cannot take revenge personally. He was raised by humans, therefore he can't use soul techniques, battle qi, nor magic. This meeting, he could only use poison. So right now, he could not take action against Zhao Hai, he can only poison him, but it seems that his poisons were not up to level.

Zhao Hai didn't care what Bowman was thinking, he thought that a man as brainwashed as Bowman wasn't worth killing personally, therefore he turned to West Wonder King, "West Wonder King, you really think that your poison can deal with me and my brother? I was being polite for not poisoning you earlier, now you're playing with poisons in front of me? Ridiculous."

West Wonder King looked coldly at Zhao Hai, "Do you really think that I only depended on that to deal with you? You're being funny."

Wales cannot help but be interested, he looked at West Wonder King with a curious face, "You have other ways of dealing with us? Did you invite a 9th rank expert? But if you have invited a 9th rank expert, you wouldn't need to poison us, but fight us directly."

West Wonder King sneered, “Using a 9th rank expert to deal with you? You think too highly of yourselves.” After he said that, he threw his wine glass towards the ground.

Zhao Hai patted his head, “Smashing the cup, that’s another one, damn, all the cliches had added up together.” At this moment, war cries could be heard outside the tent.

Zhao Hai looked at West Wonder King once, he shook his head then waved his hand, rows of undead Fighting Bulls appeared in the tent, before long, their numbers collapsed the tent. Under their protection, Zhao Hai and Wales who were on their mount and carriage respectively managed to escape the camp under the protection of nearly ten thousand undead cavalry.

When Zhao Hai released the undead, West Wonder King was frightened. He had heard about human Dark Mages, but he didn’t hear about any Dark Mages capable of commanding so many undead, this scale was very scary.

While he was dumbfounded, Wales and Zhao Hai left the tent and headed outside the camp. The prepared ambush simply didn’t succeed because they were repelled by the undead.

West Wonder King wanted to rally some troops to chase Wales down, but it was already too late, Wales managed to leave the camp. West Wonder King saw Wales leaving the camp and knew that he was already done for. With the strength of his camp, it was impossible to contend with Wales’ army, he knew that he was already dead.

However West Wonder King didn’t want to just willingly die, he was not a heroic character. He was ambitious and unwilling of living under another person, he thought that the Fighting Bull chieftain was inferior, thus he cooperated with the Herculean Bulls and betrayed the Fighting Bull chieftain.

But he was also a person who covets life and fears death, a person who would cling to someone powerful. Otherwise, why did the

first thing he did when hearing that the Herculean Bulls were defeated was to reduce the Herculean Bull's 2nd and 3rd princesses to slaves.

This time, to deal with Wales, he completely depended on Bowman, considered the possibility of succeeding, and ended up agreeing. This was his last chance, so he was quite desperate.

In his mind, currently in the Cow-Headed Race, besides the Herculean Bull clan, he had the most strength. The Fighting Bull chieftain had already been dealt with by the Herculean Bulls. If, at this time, he could deal with the Herculean Bulls, he may become the king of the entire Cow-headed Race.

Because of this greed, he decided to take the risk and planned to eliminate Wales. But he didn't calculate the existence of Zhao Hai, thus he was already doomed to fail.

It was not only West Winder King who didn't calculate Zhao Hai, Bowman had also miscalculated. In the beginning, when Bowman was concocting his plan, Zhao Hai still wasn't present in the prairie. Zhao Hai only arrived when they had already begun with their plans. Wales was unable to return to the main camp in time, thus they had not received any information about Zhao Hai. When Wales returned, the main camp was already defeated, thus they only thought that he was escaping so they didn't take note of Zhao Hai again. Now that they had been made aware of Zhao Hai's existence, it was already too late.

Chapter 310 – My Own Kingdom

When Zhao Hai made it outside the camp, he immediately recalled all the undead, fearing that the troops would misunderstand. But waiting for Zhao Hai and Wales outside was Kony, so when Kony saw the two approaching, he immediately led troops to escort them.

As Wales was entering the camp, he already instructed Kony to prepare to aid them at any time. Therefore, Kony was paying attention to the camp's condition, he even refused his troops to drink the milk wine provided by West Wonder King.

He was right in not drinking, because the milk wine given by West Wonder King was also poisoned. If they were poisoned then Zhao Hai would need to detoxify them when he came out.

Naturally this was only possible because Zhao Hai added life liquid to the mutton soup that was served. This reinforced their bodies against poison, otherwise, they wouldn't be able to wait until Zhao Hai would come out, they would have been killed before then.

After Kony escorted Wales, they didn't immediately charge to attack, instead they retreated a bit before organizing their lines properly.

Zhao Hai's carriage also retreated to the very back of the army, he knew that although he could exterminate the camp using his undead, Wales certainly wouldn't want that. Wales wanted to take care of their matters themselves, so Zhao Hai didn't participate in the assault, instead just went to the back.

Looking at West Wonder King's camp with a cold gaze, Wales shouted, "My clansmen, West Wonder King, the ungrateful bastard, had finally betrayed us and also colluded with the Radiant Church to poison me. My clansmen, I declare that the Fighting Bulls shall be reduced to slaves from today on, charge!!"

After saying that, he lifted his ax, and along with the other Herculean Bulls, issued a war-cry and charged towards West Wonder King's camp.

In the previous battle between the Fighting Bulls and the Herculean Bulls, they were fighting inside the main camp so they were quite wary of the destruction in their camp. Now, however, was different, they were battling at West Wonder King's camp, so even if they did destroy the camp they wouldn't need to be worried. Therefore they just charged towards the camp without abandon, back at the main camp, they would hesitate upon which to charge, but this time they didn't need to.

This time Zhao Hai had finally experienced the terrifying effect of a full-on Herculean Bull charge. No matter person, carriage, nor tent, as long as they were in the way, they would absolutely be blown off, it was an impact power no less than a tank.

Zhao Hai wasn't a bit worried, and was just quietly watching at the back. This time, he didn't bring Laura and the others with him. He left his Ghost Staff back at the main camp, this way, he can instantly teleport to the main camp, and Laura could also use the space to appear at his side.

Zhao Hai knew that this battle would be the last battle he'd experience in the Prairie this year. After this battle, he would return to the human territories and head towards the Rosen Empire.

Zhao Hai was certain that West Wonder King would be defeated, West Wonder King's military strength was inferior to Wales'. His personal strength was also inferior to Wales. And now that Wales was at the prime of his victories, morale was at its peak. But West Wonder King's troops were terrified upon spotting the Herculean Bulls, making the fighting strength of both sides very disproportional. West Wonder King would without a doubt, be defeated.

Zhao Hai now wanted to see how Wales would treat the commoners inside West Wonder King's camp. While Zhao Hai was waiting, suddenly a loud voice echoed throughout West Wonder King's camp, "Those who want to surrender, kneel, and they shall be spared. Those who want to surrender, kneel, and they shall be spared."

Hearing this, Zhao Hai was relieved, this shout didn't just come out of a single person, but all the Herculean Bulls. Those innocent Fighting Bulls wouldn't be dealt with by Wales, so they will certainly surrender.

It was as what Zhao Hai thought, these ordinary Fighting Bulls didn't want to make war with the Herculean Bulls. No matter what West Wonder King thought, in their minds the Herculean Bulls had helped them before, so they shouldn't be thinking of the Herculean Bulls as enemies.

When the Herculean Bulls were defeated, what West Wonder King did wasn't what they wanted. Many weren't in line with West Wonder King's thoughts, furthermore they were just ordinary Fighting Bulls, so a large number quickly surrendered.

West Wonder King wanted to escape, but was unable to, in the end he was killed amidst the chaotic clash. Bowman already died in the hands of Zhao Hai's undead, he cannot use magic, battle qi, nor soul techniques, he could only poison and plot, he was completely useless. Naturally, in this battle, he would be the first one to fall.

The fighting finished as the day ended, this time the Fighting Bulls were utterly defeated. Of the original five hundred thousand, a hundred thousand were killed, leaving behind four hundred thousand people. And also, in this battle, Wales had lost about twenty thousand Herculean Bulls.

Now, it could be said that in the prairie, there would be no more Fighting Bulls, they can only be known as Herculean Bull's slave clan, impossible to be called an independent clan.

After the battle ended, Zhao Hai and the other took three days to recover inside West Wonder King's tent. Then they set off towards the main camp. Of course, they also brought everything from West Wonder King's camp.

Zhao Hai originally wanted to see Beta, but after asking, he discovered that Beta had been killed in the chaos. This made Zhao Hai sad, he didn't think that his friend would die.

After more than ten days of hurrying along, they finally returned the Herculean Bull's camp. Once they reached the camp, Wales immediately demoted the Fighting Bulls officially as slaves and confiscated all of their weapons and made them live with the other slaves.

Because it wasn't easy to transmit messages during the winter, not many knew that the Fighting Bulls had been reduced to being slaves. Even among the Cow-headed race, there were plenty who didn't know that the Herculean Bulls had managed to claim back the old camp. This was the prairie's winter, arid, and very desolate.

After returning to the camp, Zhao Hai discussed his plans with Laura, then prepared to head back. Although Wales was reluctant, he also knew that Zhao Hai and the others weren't comfortable being here, so he agreed.

But this time, he cannot make Zhao Hai return empty-handed. He gave Zhao Hai about two hundred thousand argali and a hundred thousand slaves, he was now filthy rich, such numbers already didn't mean a thing to him. He also knew that Zhao Hai liked strange animals, therefore he had some people get some Stoneskin Bulls to give Zhao Hai. Unfortunately, it didn't make the Ranch level-up, a Stoneskin Bull wasn't enough to upgrade the ranch.

However, the evaluation of the Stoneskin Bull was very good. The space evaluated it as level 30, with a maturation time of 24

hours, can give birth 8 times and produces five calves each time, needing five feed every hour.

Generally speaking, Zhao Hai was very satisfied with his time in the Prairie. However, he didn't immediately send the slaves that Wales gave him towards Iron Mountain Fort, the fort wasn't able to support such number at this time. Zhao Hai would only bring them when spring comes, when he would expand the fort.

Wales didn't object, anyway, they had enough food for the entire tribe. They simple didn't have any food problems, Zhao Hai also gave them so much food, so raising these few people wouldn't be a problem.

Zhao Hai only brought with him the two hundred thousand argali. Now that it was winter in the prairie, it would be difficult to also leave these argali here with Wales.

Although he had decided to leave, there were still many things that he had to take care of. So only after ten days did he manage to finish preparing, they were already ready to go.

Wales escorted Zhao Hai for about ten li, he didn't want to part with Zhao Hai. Seeing Zhao Hai's convoy leave the horizon, Wales has still very hesitant.

By his side, Mendez turned to Wales, "Little Seven, let's go back, in the spring, we would see Zhao Hai again. He is our Herculean Bull clan's Crown Prince, he'll certainly come back."

Wales sighed, "It's a pity that Little Hai wasn't a true Beastman, otherwise, the Herculean Bull Clan wouldn't need to fear anyone." Having said that, he patted his mount and began heading back to the camp. Mendez also followed behind hastily. They wouldn't just give up on Zhao Hai, even though the time that they spent together was quite short, Zhao Hai had given them many things. And Zhao Hai was very considerate towards them the whole time, they had developed a special sentiment towards Zhao Hai, he had their benevolence, friendship, as lastly, their sense of gratitude.

The Beastmen were very sentimental people, they would express their feelings directly, who was good to them, they would treat well, while those who were not good to them, they wouldn't bother giving them face. Zhao Hai did so much for them, naturally they would see him as someone good.

Zhao Hai had also been looking at Wales, when he saw that Wales and the others were headed back to the camp, he took a breath and gathered all of his things and returned to Iron Mountain Fort.

Because of the war, Zhao Hai hadn't been able to return to the fort. After he arrived, he cannot help but stare, he didn't think that Iron Mountain Fort would be surprisingly warm.

Zhao Hai estimated that the temperature of the prairie to be 40 degrees below zero, but here at Iron Mountain Fort, it was actually 10 degrees above zero, as long as people wear a bit of thick clothes, they would be fine.

Zhao Hai and Laura did not think that Iron Mountain Fort would be this warm, Laura immediately replace her thick body coat with something much more comfortable.

They appeared at the living room inside the fort. Currently, there was no one here, Zhao Hai looked for Green and Kun, but they were apparently not inside the fort, they should be outside.

As the four people went out of the living room, they immediately saw some slaves that had their commoner status restored. These people had already become accustomed to Zhao Hai mysteriously appearing and disappearing, they just bowed towards the group then went on to their busy jobs.

Currently, everybody had their own work, they felt extremely fulfilled. Their stomachs were full, they were well-dresses and also well-paid. They felt like everyday was a dream. These kinds of days were something that they even didn't dream of before.

Zhao Hai went to inspect several factories first, each factory was

very busy, which was normal. The milk wine production was very high, everyday they would be able to deliver about a thousand jin. The wool factory was producing products like the beastmen did, but even better.

Before, when the beastmen were making these products, they were using their ancient ways, therefore their style were very practical. Now, in the wool production factory, there were also many human women at work, these women were very clever and deft. They carried on to improve the beastman's method, making the products made in the factory look more refined compared to the beastman's.

The rice mill was also busy everyday, the oil processing plant was also at the same state. They didn't stop having transactions with the Purcell Duchy, but Cai'er informed him that there were a few people monitoring Stony Mountain, but because they couldn't see Zhao Hai's shadow, they slowly withdrew.

Zhao Hai and the group slowly walked outside the fort, once they were outside the fort, Zhao Hai saw that the once black lands was now covered white with snow. The skies were dropping snow, although not to the point of being the same intensity as the prairie.

Looking at all of these, Zhao Hai cannot help but draw a long breath, "I don't know why, but after seeing this scene here, why do I feel that much better compared to when I was back at the Beastman Prairie?"

Laura smiled and replied, "This is our own place, so it would surely look better. Now, I really admire Cai'er's ability, can you see the difference between inside and the outside? I really didn't expect Cai'er's capability to be this strong. It seems that in the later winters, we wouldn't need to prepare thick clothes anymore.

Zhao Hai laughed, "True, with Cai'er, we wouldn't need to wear thick clothes in the next few days. But we cannot do that next year, next year we would have more than hundred thousand people,

thinking about this gives me a headache, where would we place a hundred thousand people?”

Laura just smiled and said, “Don’t worry, the Black Wasteland is vast, there should be places we could use. What I’m mainly worried right now is the need for stone in expanding Iron Mountain Fort. Though we could mine stone, the progress was very slow, if we build stone houses for the hundred thousand people, the amount of stone we would need would be too large. We shouldn’t make the hundred thousand people live inside the fort. I think we should carry out our plan of building a hamlet.”

Zhao Hai nodded, he looked at the vast white plain. He cannot help but feel passionate, “Yes, we should start implementing our plans, we must establish our own kingdom.”

Chapter 312 – Playing the Role of A Dandy

Laura looked at the vast lands, she repeated the words with a flat tone, “Our own kingdom, Our own kingdom.” This thought would make any person feel excited.

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, “Yes, our own kingdom. Let’s wait for Grandpa Green and the others to come back, we need to discuss the matter about the living conditions of the hundred thousand people so that after spring they could arrive. Although they were only half-beastman, they still had lived their entire lives in the prairie, so they might not have any experience with farming. It seems that we need to head sooner towards the Rosen Empire and buy some human slaves.”

Laura agreed, “We should, but before that we should meet up with Bell and settle the milk wine business with him, then we proceed, what do you think?”

Zhao Hai nodded, “Sure, we can go through Stony Mountain to head towards Casa City and see the situation there. From Casa City, we could then head towards Iksa Territory and find Bell, then settle the milk wine business and at the same time asking if he has any connections in Carson City. This is important for our later actions, but this time’s travel, we cannot do so with my Dark Mage persona, that would be obviously inappropriate.”

Laura nodded, “Naturally, that wouldn’t be proper, if you go with your Dark Mage persona, people may hold suspicions. First we need to head back and wait for Grandpa Green and the others to come back, then we should discuss with them our further actions.”

Zhao Hai agreed, then turned his head towards the snowy area outside, he then lead the three females to return to the fort. The four sat down, and after a while, Green and the others had come back from the outside, along with Green were Merine, Kun, and Shue.

Shue wasn't in the castle most of the time, the nearby terrains of the Iron Mountains weren't explored before so Green gave the task to him.

Shue carried out reconnaissance on the surrounding mountains, Green wanted to know all about the mountains these past few days. He wanted to know where were the good spots for mining stone, as well as spots for cutting trees.

Green wore a cloak made of rabbit skin, it was obvious that the temperature outside didn't compare to inside the castle. Since the castle was warm, they just put on this easy to remove cloak on.

Seeing that Zhao Hai's group had returned, Green stared for a moment. Then after which the others became happy, Green smiled and asked, "Young Master, why did you return this early? Was the matter in the prairie already dealt with?"

Zhao Hai nodded, then gave them some items he got from the prairie, then he told them about the Radiant Church's Ultimate Weapon Program and the church's nurturing of beastman children to send them back to the prairie and deal with the prairie's inhabitants, he also made these things confidential.

This was the first time that Green had learnt of these matters, when he heard Zhao Hai's testimony, he frowned, "I didn't think that the Radiant Church would have such a plan. Young Master, you should inform someone from the League of Dark Mages about this. If they receive this information, they would definitely do some preparations against it, additionally, they could deal with the Radiant Church, relieving us of some pressure."

Zhao Hai nodded, "I was going to do that exact thing this time that I came back. I cannot wait for spring to arrive at the prairie, so I planned to use this period of time to arrange some matters. I would like to take a look at the situation inside Casa City, then head towards Iksa domain to find Bell and settle the milk wine partnership. I could also use this time to tell him this information

as well as ask if he has any connections inside Carson City of the Rosen Empire. If he did, then it would make our travel more convenient, we would be able to open a proper trade route towards the prairie.”

Kun agreed, “Good, Carson City is considered to be the biggest supply market and distribution center in the entire continent. It is a truly good place, we have our products and if we decide to sell it there, nobody would take notice. And Bell wouldn’t be able to handle our full milk wine capacity, so we should sell those at Carson City. But in Carson City, there are numerous influential figures, each and every one of them had greed as their second nature, if we cannot find a powerful backer, then I fear that we cannot escape the same destiny as in Purcell Duchy. Bell is a member of the league, so perhaps he has some connections. I heard that among the Rosen Empire were some Dark Mages who were serving their army, which says that Rosen Empire wasn’t opposed to Dark Mages. So the League of Dark Mages may hold a lot of influence there, we could use that influence to our advantage.”

Zhao Hai nodded, “Grandpa Kun’s words are right, we could use this to our advantage, but the issue now is, I want to look for Bell but I cannot go out with my Dark Mage persona. I am thinking as to persona should I go with?”

Green chuckled, this really became a problem. Currently, in the Aksu Empire, all Dark Mages were under deep monitoring, so if Zhao Hai appeared as a Dark Mage, then people would deduce who he is.

Green looked at Zhao Hai, “Young Master, what persona would you like to go by?”

Zhao Hai thought for a moment, then he said, “A merchant would not be good, I think I could appear as a Mage, but not a Dark Mage. Now, the Space could use Fire and Earth Element magic, might as well appear as a dual element mage. Moreover, it would be best to get arrogant, making myself widely known, if it’s like

this then people would perhaps not suspect me.”

Green nodded, “Acting high-profile wouldn’t be a problem, we didn’t need to fear anyone judging by our present strengths. Even if they came to know of our real identities, they would only send a 9th rank expert, which we can make deal with easily, even more so with an army, therefore being high-profile would be good.”

Zhao Hai smiled, “I have never thought of releasing my identity, if it were really revealed, then I certainly wouldn’t need to fear. But it would be a problem with future missions, as my false identities might be exposed, so I absolutely cannot make them know who I am.”

Kun smiled and said, “Right, a dual element mage isn’t bad, in the entire continent, there weren’t a lot of dual element mages. So these mages were considered to be geniuses, and they were given leverage to become a bit arrogant. But we still need to make Little Hai prepare, we should at least apply some simple makeup.”

Zhao Hai scratched his head, “How to we apply it?”

Kun looked at Zhao Hai, then turned to Laura and said, “This depends on Laura. Laura, make Zhao Hai look like a dandy.”

Several people chuckled, Laura looked at Zhao Hai and said, “We need to dye Brother Hai’s head. I happen to have some dye powder, we can dye his hair golden. Then we could glue a small beard on his lip, making his age look older, a pair of pink crystal glasses would do good as well.”

A black line appeared on Zhao Hai forehead, “I could settle with the dye and the beard, but why the pink crystal glasses? Can we trade it with another color?”

Laura smiled, “Pink is good, pink is a very popular color in the Continent right now. I saw a lot of dandies wearing pink crystal glasses, very beautiful. Rest assured, I have a pair of pink crystal glasses, I will give them to you in a while.”

Zhao Hai shook his head, and decided to not oppose anymore, and just went with Laura's plans. He turned to Laura and said, "How about you? Exiting like you are currently would be conspicuous. I think in the Continent, there are a lot of people who knows of you more than me."

Laura faintly smiled and replied, "Mine would be very simple, I could just dye my hair and then wear a veil. You should know that any aristocrat would have their female companion usually wear a veil, so as to prevent any other people appreciating their female companion."

Zhao Hai can only smile bitterly, he really didn't have anything good to say. Here, there were differences between men and women. For men, generally only Dark Mages would wear veils, but for women, they could wear them casually.

Green nodded and said, "This is good, but when the day comes, you should travel by carriage, and not any ordinary carriage. We need it to be more majestic, Laura's carriage cannot be used since many had already seen it. The Radiant Church's carriage cannot be used either since one could notice it at a glance. What kind of carriage would you use?"

Zhao Hai knitted his brows, to be honest, he didn't think that he would act a role of being a dandy. So having proper carriage wouldn't just be enough, to the continent, a carriage is a sign of a man's wealth and status.

Now the issue is that Zhao Hai embarrassingly didn't have a very good carriage. In the continent, a good carriage is made from good materials. But Zhao Hai didn't have any good materials, naturally, he also wouldn't have a good carriage.

Zhao Hai just shook his head and said, "It would be very difficult to get a good carriage in such a short time."

Laura knit her brows, "It's not impossible, we can demolish the lightwood carriage of the Radiant Church, then use those

lightwood to make our own carriage. A lot of good carriages in the continent uses lightwood as their material. As long as we do not follow the carriage design of the Radiant Church, then would should be fine.”

Kun agreed, “Good, then well arrange for it immediately. We shall bring some artisans and also among the beastmen there should be some who knows how to make carriages. I think the task should be done in a few days, but what Magic Beast would you use to pull the carriage with?”

Zhao Hai thought for a moment then said, “How about using a large horned bull? This magic beast is ordinary, its endurance is also very good. What’s most important is that a beastman race’s magic beast is a rarity, if we pull the carriage with this magic beast, then people would know that we are in a good relationship with the beastmen. Like this, we can sell beastman products and nobody would have suspicions.”

Kun thought for a moment then agreed.

Chapter 312 – Keeping Up Appearances

On the streets of Casa City, a strange convoy was slowly moving forward. One could say strange, since the convoy only composed of two carriages. The carriage at the front looked like it was made of high-quality materials, the continent's rare lightwood. The appearance of the carriage was very succinct, it had some resemblance to the carriages that the Radiant Church uses, but it can be seen that its more likely from an old aristocratic family.

The main thing about this carriage was that it had an exotic touch to it. The style of the carriage did not purely adapt human craftsmanship, there were also beastman craftsmanship here and there.

Beastman craftsmanship was very different than the humans. The human were very rich in materials, so when they construct carriages, they would use a lot nails and metals parts.

But the beastman race weren't blessed with resources. Since they were lacking iron, their carriages would be mostly made of wood and used wood joints for their processes, using the least amount of metal as possible, a discerning eye would be able to tell which is which.

And one can see that on this carriage's body, there were a lot of beastman style wood joints present. If one was knowledgeable, he could see that the carriage was very different than the other carriages used by humans.

Even more bizarre was the magic beast pulling the carriage, it looked much like a bull, but it was very different. The bull had massive horns at the sides of its head, each about 2 meters in length. When the Bull lowers its head, it would occupy about 4 meters of road width.

In addition to lightwood, the carriage also uses a lot of pure white beastman blankets. If one were to feel it and if they had experience

in the prairie, they would see that this was the same material used for high-profile tents.

Driving this carriage was a warrior, he wore ordinary warrior clothing, and at his back were axes, he was calmly driving the carriage through the streets.

Following behind the carriage was an ordinary Cow-headed race's carriage. The carriage was very large, capable of holding a lot of things, a servant was sat driving the carriage.

The pedestrians were often seen inspecting the carriages, they felt curious about the shape and appearance of it. But since it looked like the carriage belonged to a person of status, they didn't dare disturb the owner.

The owner of the carriage was naturally Zhao Hai, it was the altered carriage originally belonging to Lindsey Becker. Because they had some Giant-horned Bulls involved in making the carriage, there obviously would be some traces of beastman craftsmanship, and because they needed to stay warm, blankets were heavily used.

Shue was the one driving the carriage, he was basically done with investigating the Iron Mountains. He took several days to explain to Green and the others his findings. When Zhao Hai noticed that Shue had nothing else to do in the fort, he made him drive his carriage.

Shue didn't oppose, he was now very convinced of his young master's ability, he was even pleased to be his carriage driver.

The carriage behind Zhao Hai was driven by Blockhead. Blockhead and Rockhead were now 6th rank warriors and are about to break through to 7th rank, what they needed the most was actual experience. So Zhao Hai made them come and drive the supply carriage.

Because the two looked exactly the same, Zhao Hai had one of them drive the carriage while the other would be inside the Space,

switching between them from time to time.

The two were also glad, they were either in the Space or inside Iron Mountain Fort, they didn't have any chances to go out. They are still young, so this was a good time for learning, but they didn't have any opportunities to do so. So when they were asked to come, they certainly wouldn't decline.

Inside the carriage that Blockhead was driving were some ordinary commodities, enough for someone to use during a long travel, this made the pedestrians even more curious.

Zhao Hai didn't start his carriage ride to Casa City from the Black Wastelands, but instead he decided to head from the direction of the prairie. This was so that the peculiarities of their carriage as well as their supplies wouldn't bring forth suspicions from other people.

Inside the carriage were Zhao Hai, Laura, Meg and Nier. The carriage was more spacious than Laura's, but the designs were quite similar. There were doors on the front and back of the carriage, as well as windows made of glass. In the middle was a cabinet, suspended above it was a magical furnace where you can use either magic or charcoal to boil water, the upper part of the cabinet held various tools while the lower part had a freezer. on the left and right sides were two rows acting as seats. Even with these, the carriage was still very spacious.

On the walls of the carriage were thick wool blankets draping towards the floors. Although the outside was snowing and cold, inside the carriage was as warm as spring.

Zhao Hai naturally wouldn't leave Shue and Blockhead freezing outside. He gave the two appropriate clothes for the weather, additionally, both driver's seats were modified so that cold winds wouldn't directly hit them.

Amidst all of these, the main distinguishing feature of the carriage was actually its usage of glass. In the continent, glass

could be considered as a top level luxury, but now they were used in Zhao Hai's carriage. It really seemed like Zhao Hai kept up his appearance up until the end.

Looking outside through the glass window, Laura smiled at Zhao Hai and said, "Brother Hai, do you think the people who see this carriage would think that the owner would be a beastman?"

Zhao Hai looked at Laura's brown dyed hair, then he smiled faintly, "I don't think so, I didn't hear any beastman who'd be so extravagant to use windows made of glass."

Laura just smiled then she said, "So how was it? Was my idea good?"

Meg looked at Zhao Hai's golden hair awkwardly, then she turned to Laura and laughed, "It's very good, you'll have to know that the young master was also a dandy before at the imperial capital. This time, nobody would suspect his current identity."

Worn on his face were the pink crystal eyeglasses, coupled with his golden hair and his highlighted eyebrows, it really did seem that he was a young noble master.

Looking at Zhao Hai appearance, Laura cannot help but smile, just like when he first Zhao Hai with this appearance. She became curious and asked Meg, "Meg, tell me all about how Brother Hai was back at the imperial capital. Did he really look and act like a dandy?"

Meg smiled, "Of course, he was even worse than the rumors, you didn't know. but he....."

Zhao Hai couldn't help but scratch his head and have a headache, but he couldn't do anything, these things were what the former Adam did. And he was now using Adam's body, so he had to own up to these things.

Looking at the girls chit chatting, Zhao Hai's mood became good. He suddenly had a blissful feeling, it was very warm, very moving.

Zhao Hai's convoy appeared at a location not far from Casa City, therefore before the day turned dark, they already arrived outside Casa City.

Because they didn't have a identification badge, the guards stopped their convoy at the gate. But Shue took out a Mage's badge and gave it to the city's guards to look at. The guards allowed them to pass, Mages in the continent had the privilege of entering cities for free.

However, the city's guards were still curious about Zhao Hai. Even though the Purcell Duchy was in the continent, they were not far from the prairie. Still, these people had not seen a giant-horned bull before. These giant-horned bulls were the companion beasts of the Giant-horned Bull tribe so they were not sold, thus the people of the continent naturally wouldn't recognize them.

Zhao Hai entered the city and immediately attracted the attention of the people inside. They hadn't seen a giant-horned bull before, thus they directed their curiosity towards Zhao Hai's carriage.

Zhao Hai didn't mind them, his carriage had already stopped in front of Casa City's biggest hotel. Looking at Zhao Hai's entrance, the hotel's attendant immediately thought that Zhao Hai was some influential person. He immediately came forward and greeted from outside the carriage, "Shelley Hotel welcomes you, distinguished guests."

Shue just stared at the attendant, then he stood up from his seat and prepared the stairs hidden under the carriage and said, "Young Master, we have arrived."

The carriage door opened, then two figures came out and stood at both sides of the stairs. Zhao Hai came out of the carriage holding Laura's hand, and when he descended the stairs, he let go of Laura's hand and held Meg's. He then slowly went down the stairs, ignored the attendant, and went directly inside the hotel.

The attendant wasn't offended, instead, Zhao Hai appeared much bigger in his mind, he couldn't recall any other person like him. This was maybe because of Zhao Hai's aura. The attendant just stayed there bowing, and didn't follow Zhao Hai inside the hotel.

Shue turned toward the attendant and said, "Look after our carriages and magic beasts. If there are any mistakes, I will not spare you."

The attendant immediately responded, "The guest can be relieved, our Shelley hotel would ensure that there would be no mistakes. Guest, you can just hand them to me."

Shue nodded, he then signaled to Blockhead and entered the hotel.

Entering the hall, there were resting areas at both sides of the hall. Zhao Hai was just sitting there while Laura was with the hotel's receptionist discussing something.

Chapter 313 – Ruyen Purcell Steps into the Stage

Shue was naturally aware of Laura's identity, so he didn't dare make Laura do these kinds of things. He immediately approached the receptionist and took over the task of arranging their rooms.

Laura saw Shue coming, she didn't hesitate to have him handle their things. She told him, "Prepare the best room for the Young Master. You and Blockhead should also live in high grade rooms, the young master said that his servants shouldn't be looked down upon."

Shue understood Laura's words, Zhao Hai didn't want to treat them unjustly therefore he just made this excuse. Shue immediately nodded and didn't say anything.

Before long, the two accommodations were prepared. At this time, the attendant who was tasked to take care of Zhao Hai's carriage came back, Shue gave him a silver coin as a tip, then turned him away.

Zhao Hai led Laura and the others to the arranged hotel accommodation. The accommodation had three bedrooms, a living room, as well as a dining room, it was certainly one of the best accommodations in the hotel.

Zhao Hai acted like he was just in an ordinary noble young master's journey. He just stayed inside the place, letting Laura handle everything. When it came to eating, the food was just delivered as well as ordering a bottle of expensive wine, no different than any other noble young master.

Not long after Zhao Hai arrived at the hotel, a servant was running quickly toward the Grand Duke's mansion and headed towards the rear courtyard.

This courtyard had a very elegant name, it was called the Orchid

Courtyard. This was because it was full of orchids before, hence it had acquired its fame.

But now, even though the place is called the Orchid Courtyard, it didn't have a single orchid in it. In place of orchids, it had a lot of Redspring flowers in it.

The redspring flowers were very beautiful, its flowers were red, but its flowering season was short. Moreover, even though these flowers were extremely attractive, some nobles sees its color as uncouth. Because of this, there were rarely any noble houses who planted these flowers.

Despite these, there was someone inside the Grand Duke's mansion who liked this flower. So currently, the Orchid Courtyard were filled with these flowers, to the point of uprooting all of the original orchids in the courtyard.

Although the inhabitants of the mansion thought that it was a pity, nobody dared to express their thoughts. This was because the person living in this courtyard was the Grand Duke's daughter, Ruyen Purcell, formerly the fiancée of Adam but later recalled the engagement.

Before, Ruyen had a huge influence inside the Grand Duke's mansion, naturally it wasn't because of Grand Duke Evan. Since Evan didn't have any power in the past, Ruyen didn't like him very much. Even though he was her father, she always responded to Evan with sarcastic comments, she didn't give Evan any face.

At that time, Ruyen depended on her grandfather, an old elder from Evan's clan. Her grandfather was a staunch supporter of Great Elder Caesar, therefore she was doted heavily by the clan. This made Ruyen develop a very arrogant attitude, she became someone whose eyes were way above their head.

It was because of this arrogance that when Ruyen heard that the Buda clan had lost its power, she immediately wanted to renounce the engagement. His grandfather was in support of this, and the

Great Elder, although he didn't voice it out because of noble honor reasons, still put pressure on the Buda clan. But they didn't imagine that the Buda clan would take initiative and renounce the engagement themselves. But it was at that point that the situation began to turn downhill.

The Great Elder lost his power, so naturally Ruyen's grandfather lost his as well. Without power, he just became an idle elder, with an absence of responsibility and power.

While this was happening, Evan's influence and power went the opposite direction. Evan suddenly took control of the entire Purcell Duchy, and with Laura's help, made a lot of money. And then when Laura managed to provoke Southern King, the entire Magic Lily store was handed to him, making the Purcell clan's power and influence even more abundant. Now, Evan's status as the Grand Duke was unshakable.

Ruyen was very regretful, but it was no use. Her previous attitude towards Evan was very terrible, in addition to her actions towards the Buda Clan, it was impossible for Evan to forgive her.

However, she was still Evan's daughter. Although Evan dislikes her, she was still provided with necessities such as food and clothing fitting for a young lady. But everyone in the Grand Duke's mansion were well aware that Ruyen's status in the mansion wasn't as great as before.

Despite all of these, Ruyen's arrogant personality couldn't just be erased. Coupled with her unsatisfactory state, the house servants became her punching bags. No matter the servant did was right or wrong, she would still scold them. More importantly, Ruyen wasn't a reliable lady, she had many scandals with various young masters inside Casa City, which gave her much infamy.

Grand Duke Evan initially didn't want to meddle with her, but now that she was affecting the entire clan's reputation, he couldn't ignore it anymore. So Evan sent warnings to the young masters to

get away from Ruyen, at the same time, he had Ruyen prepare to travel towards Rosen Empire's capital Carson City to study.

Because of her father's decree, Ruyen was very frustrated these past few days. She didn't want to leave Purcell Duchy. In the duchy, she was a princess, although not in good graces, she still had her young lady status. Here, if she wanted wind, wind would come, if she wanted rain, rain would pour.

But if she went to Rosen Empire, everything would be different. What was the Rosen Empire? It was the most powerful human nation in the continent. Let alone a Purcell Duchy lady, even if the Aksu empire's princess were to go there, she would be a nobody, not to mention a mere Purcell Duchy young lady.

Because she was frustrated, she ordered her servant to find her some amusing things to make her feel better. Otherwise, she would have to give her servants a good beating.

Now all of the servants in the mansion were afraid of her. This young lady's temper was very short, every so often she would whip a servant. What made the servants most distressed was the fact that the young lady grew up inside the Duchy, there were very few interesting things that she had not yet seen here.

And while these servants were worrying, Zhao Hai's convoy suddenly arrived at Casa City which caused quite a stir. They hadn't seen a giant-horned bull before, so the servant immediately ran to the Grand Dukes mansion's Orchid Courtyard to tell Ruyen this information.

Ruyen was truly bothered these days, since in two days she would leave Purcell Duchy. This frustration caused her to shout loudly, "Someone come here, Jill hasn't arrived yet? If he's still not, might as well not let him return."

At this time, an excited sound came from outside, "Young Lady, Young Lady, an interesting thing had arrived in town."

Ruyen froze for a moment, then said, “Come in.”

The door was opened, Jill came in from the door, he had a long nose with small openings, his body wasn't that tall. He was Ruyen's personal servant, a children of a Purcell Clan slave, thus he cannot betray the clan. At the same time, he was also a eunuch, otherwise, Evan wouldn't let him become Ruyen's servant.

Jill immediately entered the room and knelt beside Ruyen, “Young Lady, I had an interesting matter to tell you.”

Quite amused with Jill, Ruyen said, “What? What amusing thing has this young lady not seen inside Casa City? If you dare deceive me, you'll better watch out for your skin.”

Jill just smiled then replied, “I wouldn't dare, your highness. This time there really is an interesting thing, it just came from outside the city, a carriage. The carriage was made up of lightwood, the person inside seemed like someone of significant status....”

Without even hearing all of Jill's word's, Ruyen grabbed a golden whip from her table and whipped Jill's shoulder with it as she scolded, “Lightwood carriage, our family also has one. And what kind of person with significant status has this young lady not seen. So is this the interesting thing you'd like to say? If so you might want to take a taste of my whip.”

Jill quickly replied, “Your highness, this one didn't deceive you, the interesting thing I mean isn't the carriage nor the person, but the magic beast pulling the carriage. It was not a horse, but a bull, it looked like a bull but it had two huge horns, each one about two meters long and a width of half a meter. This one hadn't seen that kind of bull before.”

Ruyen was about to raise her whip, now that she heard what Jill said, she was surprised. Then she put down her whip and looked at Jill, “Are you really not deceiving me? There really is a bull with horns that big? I don't think that you can find something that

interesting, what nonsense.”

Jill added, “Your highness, I really didn’t deceive you. What I said is actually real, it’s currently at the back of Shelley Hotel, I saw it with my own eyes. It’s horns were this big.” He said as he gestured with his hands how large the horns were.

This time, Ruyen was really interested. Actually, she didn’t believe that Jill would lie to her, so she immediately said, “Really? You’re not lying?”

Jill nodded again and again, “Even if I had extra courage today, I still wouldn’t dare deceive the young lady.”

Ruyen nodded, “Prepare the carriage, I want to go to Shelley Hotel and take a look. If there is no bull like what you’ve told me, you’re finished.” She stood up as she spoke.

Standing in front of the door were two maidservants, they didn’t suffer any little sufferings from Ruyen’s whip, therefore they would tremble whenever Ruyen approached them. Jill also followed Ruyen, appearance looking calm but in fact, his shoulder was in agony. His shoulder was still burning from being whipped, but he cannot make Ruyen see his pain, so he can only follow her with a small smile.

The three servants immediately left the Orchid Courtyard. Jill was immediately tasked by Ruyen to prepare the carriage, Ruyen was still holding her golden whip.

This whip was also Ruyen’s special instrument. Ruyen was a magician, so it stands to reason for her to have a magic staff, but she didn’t like staffs, so she got a whip. But her whip was very displeasing to the eye, making her a joke inside Purcell Duchy.

Ruyen got on a majestic carriage pulled by a flaming horse and headed for Shelley Hotel. Her two maids were sitting with her inside the carriage while Jill became the driver. They didn’t need guards since the carriage had sported the Purcell Family’s insignia,

and nobody dared to touch them inside the Duchy.

The horse quickly moved towards the hotel. Regarding the hotel, Jill was very familiar with it. Not only was it popular inside the Duchy, but also in the entire continent. It was owned by the Shelley Family who were the owners of the biggest hotel chains in the entire continent.

The Shelley Family, also known as the serpent family because of their insignia being coiled serpents, had been in the hotel business for about a millennia. Their names represented high-end hotels in the continent. Almost every big city in the continent would have its own Shelley Hotel.

Besides providing lodging and dining, the hotel also accepts mercenary missions, big mercenary missions that cannot be handled by small mercenary groups.

Ruyan had also come to dine in this hotel before, so Jill was familiar with this place. Quickly, they arrived at the front door of the hotel.

The attendant noticed Ruyen's carriage, and after seeing Ruyen arrive, he immediately welcomed her outside the carriage, "This one welcomes the young lady."

Ruyen walked out of the carriage then looked at the attendant and asked, "Wellen, I heard that there was a strange magic beast that arrived at your hotel, is it true?"

When Wellen heard what Ruyen said, he immediately understood why she came. Wellen fully knew that this young lady was a tyrant inside Casa City, so he cannot dare to offend her. He immediately responded with a respectful tone. "Your Highness, there was such a magic beast. It's horns were massive, I hadn't seen bulls with horns as massive as those."

Ruyen replied, "Quickly, lead me to take a look." As she said that, she left the carriage and headed to the hotel. Wellen, Jill, and the

two servants immediately followed.

Ruyen was also very familiar with the hotel, she didn't only dine here but also had meetings with her friends, she also came here to do other things, so Shelley Hotel had been very familiar with this young lady. But since the hotel had a rule to not disclose their guest's matters, not many people came to know about it.

Because of this, Ruyen was also very familiar with the hotel's back door. One had to pass through the lobby and then head the door at the back to go towards the back area of the hotel.

At the back of the hotel wasn't single stable. It was divided into small courtyards, they were there for nobles who didn't want to be disturbed, so the hotel would give them the courtyards. And the place where the hotel would place the magic beasts would be in the very far back. There were people who were specialized to take care of the guest's carriage and magic beast. Carnivorous and herbivorous magic beasts were also separated.

Chapter 314 – Meeting His First Fiancee

Ruyen stood outside the giant-horned bull's pen. The giant-horned bull looked very carefree while grazing leisurely. These giant-horned bulls were docile magic beasts, even under Ruyen's gaze, it didn't even respond, it would only occasionally flap its ear.

After looking at the bull's massive horns, Ruyen was speechless for some time. Then, her eyes lit up, she walked towards the bull and reached her hand out towards its horns.

This move scared Jill and Wellen, although the bull looked very docile, the way it was brought up was unknown. The two quickly moved to stop her, but they were a step too late. Ruyen had already traced her hand along the horns of the giant-horned bull.

Despite this, the giant-horned bull didn't do anything, as if nothing happened, it just stood there leisurely chewing on its fodder.

Seeing its response, Jill and Wellen breathed a sigh of relief. The two were also very curious of this magic beast, they couldn't help themselves and also traced their hands on the bull's horns.

The giant-horned bull didn't have any reaction at all. Even if it was surrounded by these many people, it just went on and ate its fodder calmly.

The more Ruyen looked at the docile giant-horned bull, the more she liked it. She turned towards Wellen and asked, "Wellen, who owns this bull? Tell me, I want to buy it."

Wellen smiled bitterly, "Your highness, you know the rules of the hotel, we cannot just disclose our guest's identity. Moreover, from what I could tell from that guest, it was very unlikely that he would sell this bull."

Ruyen snorted, "Telling me this is useless, I didn't ask you the identity of the guest. Just tell me where the guest stays and were

fine. I'll take care of the rest."

Wellen smiled bitterly for a moment, he knew that the lady was irritated. This lady was a very troublesome person, but it was like what she said, their hotel cannot disclose information about the guest, but if some people like to visit a guest, the hotel could comply.

Wellen told Ruyen Zhao Hai's room number. Ruyen understood that this accommodation was one of the hotel's best, not counting the rear courtyards, this room would be the best one.

However, she was also relieved, although Ruyen was quite unruly, she wasn't a fool. In her mind, Zhao Hai's identity wasn't that high, otherwise he would have rented the rear courtyards.

Actually, her idea was correct, Zhao Hai's identity was indeed just normal. Since he cannot use the status of his Buda family, and Laura cannot disclose her identity, they didn't have the status of a noble. With only Zhao Hai's magician identity, the other nobles won't pay attention to them.

Jill understood the young lady more than Wellen, so he didn't obstruct Ruyen. Ruyen continued to walk towards the hotel.

The hotel was divided into six floors, the sixth floor contained the best rooms, the fifth floor was a notch lower, the fourth floor would even be worse, the third floor was the restaurant, the second floor had the conference rooms and leisure quarters, and the ground floor contained the reception and basic rooms.

Zhao Hai's room was at the sixth floor, but Shue and Blockhead stayed at the fifth floor. Although Shue's status outside was higher than Blockhead, he knew that to Zhao Hai, he wasn't more important than Blockhead and Rockhead. Blockhead and Rockhead grew up together with Zhao Hai since they were little, and they were ready to sacrifice their lives for Zhao Hai at any time. Zhao Hai regarded the two of them as his own brothers, so even though Shue acted like he was more important than Blockhead in front of

the hotel staff, he didn't act all highly when they entered their room.

Zhao Hai didn't give them orders, they just wanted to look at Casa City's situation while they were passing by as they head towards Iksa Domain. They didn't want to stay here for long, therefore they maintained a low profile.

However, even though Zhao Hai wanted to be low-key, there were some people that don't want him to maintain his low profile. It was just like what other people said, "even when staying at home, a calamity would still come". This was Zhao Hai's current situation.

Laura also did nothing, she just looked outside the window at the people being busy outside. To be honest, being at a high place while looking at the scenery outside felt very good.

Zhao Hai was holding a glass of red wine while Laura stood beside him, they were looking at the people below Casa City through the window. Suddenly Zhao Hai sighed, "One day, I want to build a tall building within Iron Mountain Fort so we can see the entire landscape of the Black Wasteland."

Laura smiled, "We do need to construct a tall building, hehe."

While she said that, a knock was heard. Laura immediately wore her veil, then Nier's sweet and delicate voice was heard, "Yes?"

Shue's voice replied, "Young Master, an attendant from the hotel just came to see me, it seems that there's someone who wants to visit you."

Seeing that it was Shue, Nier opened the door to let him enter. When Shue entered the room, Zhao Hai looked at him while holding his wine glass, "Visit me? With my identity, there should be no one who knows of me in Casa City right? Why would people want to see me?"

Shue glanced at Laura and the others. Then with a weird

expression, he replied, “The identity of the person who wanted to visit the young master is quite special, its Purcell Duchy’s young lady, Ruyen Purcell.”

Hearing Shue mention this name, Zhao Hai and the others were shocked. These people knew of Zhao Hai’s true identity, so they would naturally know of the conflict between Zhao Hai and Ruyen Purcell. They didn’t think that Ruyen would pay them a visit this time.

Zhao Hai frowned, “She wanted to visit me? What did the hotel attendant say?”

Shue replied, “The attendant said that young lady Ruyen would be waiting for you at the third floor dining room. Because the name we registered this time was Wales, nobody knows about our identity, the hotel attendant just told me that Her Highness Ruyen wanted to see Mister Wales.”

This time, Zhao Hai used Wales’ name, Wales personally knew a few people in the continent. So when it happened that Zhao Hai needed a name, he used Wales’.

Zhao Hai nodded, “I seems that she doesn’t know my identity, then what did she want to see me for?”

Laura smirked, “Why? You don’t want to see your former fiancée? She’s Casa City’s most beautiful woman and also very famous, moreover she likes person with distinguished status. With Elder Brother Hai’s current appearance, she will definitely like you.” Meg and the others laughed. With Zhao Hai’s current appearance, he truly looked like a distinguished person.

Zhao Hai cannot bear but force a smile, he turned his head and said, “Well, let’s stop talking about this, Purcell Duchy’s princess is waiting for us. Not accepting her invitation wouldn’t be good for us. I also wanted to see what young lady Ruyen really wants.” With this, the group started heading downstairs.

Blockhead was waiting for Zhao Hai below, when he saw Zhao Hai walk out, he immediately followed him. Together, the group headed towards the third floor dining hall.

Shelley hotel's third floor dining hall was open to the outside. Also, the chef here was very capable, he's very famous inside Casa City. If someone of high status in Casa City wanted to treat someone, they would definitely take them to Shelley Hotel.

Right now, there were many people inside the dining hall, eating. These people were the most distinguished and influential people in Casa City. Some were residents of the hotel, whose identities were not simple. In fact, if you stay in Shelley hotel, your status wasn't ordinary, at least a wealthy businessman, otherwise, the hotel's prices would make your wallet cry.

Ruyen had already entered the dining hall for quite some time. All that knew her in the dining hall gave her a salute, they all knew that Ruyen wanted to be in the spotlight, so they would be happy to cooperate.

Ruyen was sitting there drinking, her golden whip was on the table. Jill and her maids stood behind her. At the same time, the guests of the dining hall were paying attention to her, they didn't know who Ruyen would meet today.

Ruyen's romantic affairs were quite well known inside Casa City, this included the fact that she wanted to break her engagement with the Buda clan, which made the Purcell clan to place pressure to the Budas to break the engagement. Despite this, many people believed that one reason the Buda clan broke the engagement by themselves was because of Ruyen's romantic affairs.

An aristocrat's life was sometimes very boring, and they also wanted to look for some entertainment. So these matters of romance became the most popular topic among nobles.

At this time, a group appeared on the dining hall's entrance. These nobles looked towards the group, and their eyes turned

bright. What made their eyes lit up were Laura and the other two women. These nobles were flower plucking experts, they didn't need to look at a woman's face to determine whether they were attractive or not. They only need to see these women's body to determine their appearances.

Without a doubt, Laura and the other two were rare beautiful women. More importantly, when they saw Laura and the other's stature, they knew that they were unmarried girls, this fact made their eyes brighter.

The other person that caught their eyes were Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai wore a low-profile yet elegant robe. His eyeglasses and mustache showed his style. These people could see that Zhao Hai's age wasn't young nor old, but he still happened to sport a mustache. Paired with his pink eyeglasses, it showed his status. They felt like Zhao Hai's identity wasn't simple, and that he was someone of a distinguished background.

The people inside the hall knew that Ruyen liked distinguished people. Those who were rumored to had been with her were all of distinguished background, Ruyen liked associating with those kinds of people.

Now, those inside the hall understood who Ruyen was waiting for. Ruyen was surely waiting for this glasses wearing gentleman with an arrogant look on his face. But they had no objection to Zhao Hai's fashion, they were just waiting to see a show.

Ruyen also saw Zhao Hai, but she didn't express anything. Although Zhao Hai's fashion style was good, and his temperament was what she liked. Zhao Hai had a disadvantage, he was not handsome enough. Ruyen just gave him a glance.

Chapter 315 – Completely Speechless

Ruyen liked people with status, since they tend to be tall and handsome. Moreover, they all knew how to flatter women, which, for Ruyen's own vanity, was very important.

Ruyen didn't care what connotation your status has, as long as you look good and knew how to please her, you pass. She looked like a queen playing with her men.

However, Zhao Hai wasn't able to enter her qualifications. This was because even though Zhao Hai was charming, he wasn't able to catch her attention.

Zhao Hai also looked at Ruyen, he knew about this fiancée of his since a long time ago. But this was the very first time that he came to see her in person, Ruyen was a beautiful woman with a long brown hair and fair skin. She was wearing bright clothing, she looked like a beautiful spring flower just by sitting there.

However, Zhao Hai didn't like women like her. It was widely known that she was extremely arrogant. Even though she was extremely attractive, she always gave the impression of arrogance and frivolity. Such attitudes weren't to Zhao Hai's liking.

Laura looked at Ruyen, unlike Zhao Hai, Laura and Nier had seen Ruyen many times before. Ruyen was a woman constantly in the spotlight on Casa City. They had some interactions before, but since their dispositions were vastly different, they didn't manage to have much connections.

Zhao Hai didn't take initiative to greet Ruyen, instead he turned his head to Shue. Shue immediately understood Zhao Hai's intention, he arrived at Zhao Hai's side and said, "Young Master, like what the attendant said, a young lady Ruyen wanted to see you, but was afraid of disturbing your rest, thus waited for you at the dining hall, this is young lady Ruyen." He said as he referred to Ruyen.

Although Shue's words sounded normal, it clearly expressed what Zhao Hai wanted to convey. Shue said that Ruyen wanted to visit him but was afraid to disturb him and therefore she waited at the dining hall. But what it did not express was the fact that Ruyen sent a request to see Zhao Hai, and thus making Zhao Hai come see her at the dining hall.

Shue's words echoed throughout the dining hall, the people inside the dining hall all knew Ruyen well, she cared very deeply for face. Now, with Shue's words, it seemed like she begged for Zhao Hai's attention, this was something that she couldn't bear.

When Ruyen heard Shue's words, her complexion turned for the worse. She placed her wine glass heavily on her table, making the entire dining hall silent. All the people present looked at Zhao Hai as if they were waiting to see a good play.

They saw Zhao Hai as a small noble coming from somewhere unknown that only came here to keep up appearances. Nobles would always flaunt their status when meeting someone of a lower social standing. But this method wouldn't work well against Ruyen.

In the Purcell Duchy, Ruyen was a princess. It was unwise to not give Ruyen any face while inside the Duchy.

However, Zhao Hai didn't care, he thought that Shue's words were said very well. He didn't pay attention to Ruyen's reaction since currently, he was supposed to act like a dandy who didn't know about the immensity of heaven and earth. So if he were to act normally, people would be suspicious.

Zhao Hai nodded, then he turned his head to Ruyen and said, "This one doesn't know why the young lady wants to see me."

Ruyen looked at Zhao Hai's impolite expression, with a pale complexion she asked, "You are Wales?"

Zhao Hai nodded and replied, "I am Wales."

Ruyen banged the table, “Impudent, you dare to be impolite with me?”

Zhao Hai looked as though he was curious at Ruyen, “This is impolite? Firstly, I am not a citizen of the Duchy. Secondly, I am a Mage, I have a corresponding authority. It can’t be that the young lady didn’t know about this?”

Ruyen’s white face was riddled with anger, she stared at Zhao Hai and said, “Impudent Mage, don’t forget that you are still in the lands of the Purcell Duchy. Daring to be rude to me? It seems like you don’t want to live anymore.”

Zhao Hai knitted his brows, “Young lady, if there’s nothing else, then I’ll take my leave.” It seemed like he didn’t take Ruyen’s threat seriously.

The people inside the dining hall looked at Zhao Hai. They didn’t expect to see such a scene. In their view, Zhao Hai’s balls were too large. Inside the Duchy, those who didn’t give Ruyen face were simply looking to die.

Ruyen was too mad to speak. Zhao Hai looked at Ruyen’s appearance, then he calmly added, “Young lady, if there is really nothing else, then I would have to say my goodbyes. I still need to hurry along tomorrow.”

Ruyen couldn’t bear how Zhao Hai treated her anymore. She held her whip and sent it whipping towards Zhao Hai, but suddenly a wind blade appeared, striking the whip away from her hand.

The wind blade was from Meg, she was a 6th rank Mage. Although she had the Iron Book in her hands, Merine always instructed her to not use it as much as possible and instead use her own magic. This was so that she could enhance her own strength as soon as possible, the Iron Book was, after all, only an external tool, and relying too much on external tools wasn’t good.

At the same time, Shue also made his move. Another Shue

appeared beside Ruyen, grabbing her neck.

The dining hall's visitors froze for a moment, then an uproar quickly followed. They didn't think that Zhao Hai would dare to lift a hand against Ruyen, his balls were too large.

Meanwhile, they also noticed Shue's prowess. They didn't think that a formidable warrior such as Shue would be serving Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai coughed and said, "Right, Shue, please let go of the young lady." Shue snorted, then the clone beside Ruyen disappeared.

Ruyen was actually terrified, she really thought that Shue would kill her. One had to know that for someone like Shue who had killed a lot of people, there would be a murderous aura that surrounded them. Ruyen was like a plant grown in a greenhouse, except for when she used magic spells during practice, she didn't have any other occasion that she needed to use magic. So when Shue went to seize her, she couldn't react at all.

After Shue released Ruyen, Zhao Hai looked at her and said, "I apologize to the young lady for my subordinate's rudeness. But if the young lady didn't attack me, he wouldn't act. So what does the young lady actually want with me? If there's nothing, then I really would like to rest."

Ruyen answered, her response made all present feel odd, she looked at Zhao Hai with a complicated look. "Mister, please wait a minute, I think that we had started on the wrong foot. I only came to ask mister if he would be willing to sell me that bull that pulled his carriage."

Ruyen's response made all people in the dining hall speechless. They blankly looked at Ruyen, they didn't think that Ruyen would give such a response.

Hearing Ruyen's words, Zhao Hai finally understood why she came to find him today. He could not help but be surprised, then

he smiled, “I’ll have to apologize to the young lady. That bull was something my beastman friend gifted me, I cannot sell it to you, I’m sorry.”

Ruyen suddenly became a polite speaker, she quickly responded, “Sir is too polite, since the magic beast was something important to mister, then I won’t raise the matter of buying it anymore. Right, what matters did mister come to the Duchy for? Maybe I can help?”

This sudden transformation of Ruyen made Zhao Hai mind blank. But since Ruyen was being polite, he couldn’t keep giving her the cold shoulder. He shook his head and replied, “The young lady is too polite, this time I was just passing by Casa City, tomorrow I will leave the Duchy to head towards Iksa Family’s territory. There’s no need for the young lady to trouble herself. Well, I’ll have to excuse myself, young lady.”

Ruyen looked at Zhao Hai’s appearance, then she nodded, “Mister can do as he pleases.” Then Zhao Hai led Laura and the others to return to their accommodations.

Seeing that Zhao Hai has left, Ruyen turned her head towards Jill, “Let’s go back.” Then she turned and walked toward the dining hall’s exit without even retrieving her golden whip.

Ruyen’s actions were very unusual, this was far from her usual behavior, all that was present looked confused as they looked at the leaving Ruyen. They didn’t know what Ruyen was thinking, but they were clear that Ruyen was someone who would definitely think of ways to get back at Zhao Hai. They knew that Ruyen wasn’t someone who would take a beating without retaliating.

After Zhao Hai’s group had returned to their room, Zhao Hai frowned as he said, “What do you think about Ruyen’s actions? Shouldn’t she be furious? Why was she calm?”

Laura looked at Zhao Hai, then she coldly harrumphed, “Because of what you did, Ruyen seemed to look at you with flames in her

eyes. Brother Hai, do you want to bet with me? Ruyen will join us tomorrow to visit Iksa Domain.”

Zhao Hai stared, he shook his head and said, “Don’t talk nonsense, I almost killed her. I think that after she heads back, she’ll find someone to deal with me. How could it be possible that she would want to travel with us?”

Laura harrumphed again, “You’re too naive. You can ask Meg whether Ruyen’s eyes while looking at you was right.”

Zhao Hai turned to look at Meg. Meg nodded, “Young Master, the way Ruyen looked at you was indeed not right. I think what Sister Laura said was right. It seems like young lady Ruyen would join us on our trip tomorrow.”

Zhao Hai was stunned, he didn’t think that Meg would agree with Laura. He was puzzled, “Was it really too obvious? Then why didn’t I notice it? Also, in addition to not giving her face, Shue also nearly killed her. Wouldn’t she bear a grudge at all?

Laura harrumphed for the third time, “Who knows, maybe she was born with deficiencies. Still, we need to see whether the young lady has made any indications of travelling. If she made preparations, then she really might follow us.”

Zhao Hai tapped his own head, he was completely speechless.

Chapter 316 – Seen Through

Zhao Hai was sitting on the living room of his hotel accommodation, Shue was before him conveying his report, “Young Master, from my inquiries, because of Ruyen’s recent scandals in the city, Grand Duke Evan has just recently decreed to have her study in Rosen Empire’s Carson City. Because of this, Ruyen is very frustrated these past few days. I heard that in the Grand Duke’s mansion, many servants had already suffered under her whip.”

Zhao Hai was shocked, he didn’t think that Ruyen would be sent that far. Moreover, she had the same destination as him, Rosen Empire’s Carson City.

Laura who was at his side smiled, “This must be heaven’s will, ah, I didn’t expect that the young lady would have the same destination as us. If we let her know that we are also headed for Carson City, she may even travel with us.”

Zhao Hai forced a smile as he replied, “Don’t talk nonsense, I don’t have that kind of charm. Look, we want to head towards Iksha City, she’s headed towards Carson City. The roads don’t go the same way, so she should not be going along with us.”

Laura just nodded and she said, “I hope so, it would be very troublesome if the young miss would really join us. Right, Brother Hai, Shue’s identity was exposed today. Uncle would certainly know, what do you think his response will be? Shouldn’t we be prepared in advance?”

Zhao Hai agreed, “Shue’s identity would be exposed sooner or later anyway. I had long since prepared, not many knew that we had captured Shue back then. We can just say that Shue had a serious injury and we just happened to save him. And due to his gratitude, he decided to serve me. Shue, you should remember this, if someone asks you later, tell them this.”

Shue complied, “Yes, Young Master.”

At this time, a knock could be heard. Zhao Hai knitted his brows, it was already late, who would look for him at this time?

Shue immediately arrived at the door then he asked, “Who is it?”

Outside, a voice could be heard, “Mister Wales, hello, I am an attendant of the hotel. I’m here to tell mister that Grand Duke Evan wishes to invite you over to his mansion.”

Zhao Hai was stunned, he didn’t expect Evan to ask them to visit his mansion. Zhao Hai cannot help but scratch his head and said, “Really troublesome, it seems that you are right, The young lady is really a headache. I just came in contact with her and now trouble came.”

Laura laughed, she knew that Zhao Hai disliked Ruyen. But this time, Evan’s invitation made Laura wary, he turned his head to Zhao Hai and said, “Brother Hai, why did you think Grand Duke Evan invited you over? Is it because of the matter of our meeting with Ruyen?”

Zhao Hai frowned, from what Laura said, he couldn’t think of this matter as anything simple. It was impossible for Evan to invite them just because they got in touch with Ruyen, this matter isn’t something that a Grand Duke would trouble himself with. So what was the reason?

Looking at Zhao Hai frowning, Laura made Shue notify the attendant. Then she turned to Zhao Hai and said, “Elder Brother, we’ll accompany you to see the Grand Duke. It was the Grand Duke who invited you, it wouldn’t be proper to ignore his invitation.”

Zhao Hai nodded, “Let’s go and see Uncle Evan.” He said as he led the group outside. Shue was a step ahead since he needed to prepare Zhao Hai’s carriage.

While Zhao Hai and others were waiting, Shue rushed their carriage to the hotel’s entrance. Then, Zhao Hai and the others

proceeded to head towards the Grand Duke's mansion along with another person. This person was a steward of the Grand Duke, he was the one who delivered Evan's message.

The steward rode his horse and lead Zhao Hai's carriage. He was afraid that Zhao Hai didn't know the way to the mansion.

The carriage quickly arrived at the Grand Duke's mansion. Shue immediately led the carriage inside the mansion, then had a house steward arrange the carriage's parking. Zhao Hai led Laura and Meg inside while the other three people followed another steward. Then the three went inside and were lead towards Evan's study.

Compared to before, Evan has already consolidated his power so he had less matters that needed his attention. When he just took over the power center of the Duchy, he needed to know about a lot of the family's matters, making him extremely busy. Now, however, he already had complete control of the family's resources. He had arranged his trusted subordinates to important positions, therefore he could trust them to do his job, he didn't need to deal with every small problem anymore.

Zhao Hai brought Laura and Meg together with him. Shue, Blockhead, and Nier were left to care for the carriage inside a small courtyard. Since Zhao Hai's current status can't be compared to the original Laura, Shue and the others cannot be arranged to a better place.

When Zhao Hai arrived outside Evan's study, the steward leading them went towards the study's door and told the servant inside to notify the Grand Duke that Mister Wales had arrived.

The servant looked at Wales and gave him a bow, then he said, "I ask mister to wait a moment". It was obvious that the servant had received proper training and was very polite. Zhao Hai nodded then just calmly stood there.

Up until now, Zhao Hai still didn't understand why Evan wanted to see him. To call him just for Ruyen is a bit improper. The reason

shouldn't just this small thing. But no matter how he racked his head, he was still confused.

The servant who entered the study returned then said to Zhao Hai, "Mister Wales, please, the Grand Duke is waiting inside." Zhao Hai nodded then led Laura and Meg inside.

There were no changes inside Evan's study, it was still like its original appearance. Evan was sitting inside waiting for Zhao Hai and the others. Then Zhao Hai was lead inside by the servant, when the three arrived in front of Evan, they gave a salute, "Has met his Excellency Grand Duke Evan."

Evan looked at Zhao Hai and cannot help but knit his brows. It was obvious that Zhao Hai was disguised, but he still nodded, "Mister Wales, please sit down."

After expressing his gratitude, Zhao Hai sat opposite Evan, while Laura and Meg stood behind him. The two were wearing veils, Evan just looked at the two then didn't care about them anymore, but his impression of Zhao Hai had already dropped by a few points.

The servant gave Zhao Hai a cup of tea, then Evan talked, "I was presumptuous this time for inviting mister, I just have a few inquiries to ask mister."

Zhao Hai quickly replied, "Please, Grand Duke, I'll aid you as long as its within my capabilities."

Evan smiled faintly, then he continued, "I heard that Mister has friends in the Beastman Prairie?"

Zhao Hai stared for a moment, then quickly thought about what Evan said, then he realized that he told Ruyen this fact. Zhao Hai immediately replied, "That's right, I'll let the Grand Duke know that I have some few commercial relations with beastmen, they are my friends."

Evan nodded, "I don't know if Mister has heard some recent

news in the prairie about a Dark Mage?”

Zhao Hai and Laura sa stunned, then they immediately understood that Evan didn't call them because of Ruyen, but instead because of this.

When they retreated from Casa City, the bought a lot of supplies needed to survive in the prairie, making known that they planned to head towards the prairie. Now that Evan has heard that Zhao Hai had friends in the prairie, he immediately invited him to ask for information.

However, Zhao Hai just knit his brows and said, “Dark Mage? I don't know if the Grand Duke knows, but the prairie is very large, the area that I had explored is very small. Therefore I didn't hear of any Dark Mage moving about in the prairie.”

Evan was somewhat disappointed, but he still nodded and said, “Forget it, I want to ask mister for help, if mister returns to the prairie later, I'll ask mister to pay attention to information about a Dark Mage and a young lady named Laura.”

Zhao Hai nodded, “This isn't an issue, by the way, can I ask the Grand Duke why you are asking information about these two people? If they offended the Grand Duke, I can discuss with my friend to issue a bounty for the arrest of these two.”

Zhao Hai intentionally said this to look at Evan's response. Evan was stunned, then he smiled, “Mister has misunderstood, these two has not offended me. It's quite the opposite, they are friends of mine. But because of a previous matter, they went to the Beastman Prairie to conduct business, then we lost all contact, I wanted to know their situation.”

Zhao Hai was suddenly enlightened, he responded embarrassingly, “I had misunderstood the Grand DUke, so they are the Grand Duke's friends. The Grand Duke can feel relieved, I will help you pay attention to them. Can I ask for their names?”

Evan smiled, “Right, the Dark Mage is called Zhao Hai, the other was Laura, Laura was originally from the Markey Family. I hope mister can pay attention to them.”

Zhao Hai responded, “The Grand Duke is too polite, this is just a small matter to me. I can just ask my beastmen friends for help gathering information.”

Evan nodded, “Then I apologize for troubling mister, when mister arrives to the Duchy next time, please come visit me in the mansion. I would appreciate meeting an outstanding young man such as you.”

Zhao Hai chuckled, “Grand Duke overpraises, this one just manages a small business, just enough to live by, nothing more. Not that outstanding at all.”

Then Zhao Hai pretended to look at the weather, he said to Evan, “The sky is already late, I need to say my farewells, I still have to leave early tomorrow. I ask the Grand Duke to excuse me.” Then he stood up.

Evan smiled faintly and responded, “I have tired mister with my invitation.” Then Evan stood up and was ready to lead Zhao Hai out, but suddenly his eyes fell on Laura and Meg. Although the two of them were wearing veils, their faces were only covered by a thin gauze, if you look close enough, you could see their faces. The two’s appearance made Evan stare.

Then, his two eyes lit up. He carefully looked at Laura, then he carefully sized Meg up. Seeing Evan’s expression, Zhao Hai didn’t feel well, it seems that Evan has noticed something.

He immediately said, “Grand Duke, please don’t bother seeing me off, I’ll excuse myself.” Then he led Meg and Laura outside the study. At this point, Evan was staring at him, Evan couldn’t help but be surprised as he immediately shouted, “Mister, please stay.”

Zhao Hai stopped then turned his head to Evan. Evan carefully

sized him up. A happy expression flashed within his eyes, then he commanded the servant, “You go out first, make sure nobody approaches my study.”

The servant complied, then turned around to go outside and guard the door. Zhao Hai couldn't help but complain in his heart, he was sure that Evan had found something out.

When the servant exited, Evan immediately arrived at the door, he carefully looked outside. Then he turned his head to Zhao Hai and looked at him with a strange expression. Zhao Hai looked at Evan, confused, “Can I know what the Grand Duke needed me for?”

Evan looked at Zhao Hai's appearance then sighed, “Boy, no need to pretend anymore. You really think that since I have not seen you for many years, I wouldn't recognize you? Even if I don't recognize you, you really think I wouldn't know Meg? You still don't know, but your father gave me your portrait, I can already identify your appearance.”

Zhao Hai stared blankly, when Evan said Meg's name, he knew that their secret had already been revealed. He didn't think that Evan's vision was that sharp.

Evan looked strangely at Zhao Hai, “I don't understand, why are you and Laura together? Laura, what's happening?”

Laura was also stunned, she didn't imagine that Evan would recognize her. Since their cover was already blown, there wasn't any point in wearing her veil anymore, so she removed it and looked at Evan, “How did Uncle Evan recognize me?”

Meg also took off her veil, although Zhao Hai didn't do any action, he observed Evan, Evan didn't answer Laura's question but instead looked at Zhao Hai, “Adam, why are you with Laura? What's going on?”

Upon hearing Evan, Zhao Hai finally lost heart since he was

recognized by Evan, he sighed and responded, “Nephew has seen Uncle Evan, your nephew has already changed his name, I’m now called Zhao Hai Buda, you can call me Zhao Hai.”

Evan stared at Zhao Hai, “Zhao Hai, you said you’re Zhao Hai? The Dark Mage Zhao Hai?”

Zhao Hai nodded, “I am, nephew has appeared in the Duchy in the past as the Dark Mage Zhao Hai.”

Hearing what Zhao Hai said, Evan couldn’t believe it, “How is this possible? This is impossible! Didn’t you drink the Water of Nothingness? How can you use Dark Element Magic?”

Zhao Hai looked at Evan and said, “Uncle Evan, I did drink Water of Nothingness. Although the Water can make a person unable to learn magic nor battle qi, they could still use their Divergent Abilities. When nephew drank the Water of Nothingness, I got a Divergent Ability, thus I can pretend being a Dark Mage.”

Chapter 317 – Mask and Status

Divergent Ability? So it's surprisingly a Divergent Ability! No wonder." Evan looked at Zhao Hai with a complex expression. "Good, a Divergent Ability is good. With this ability, I won't need to be worried about you. Right, Little Hai, where are you living right now? Why do you have so much grain?"

Zhao Hai was embarrassed, "This, I must apologize to Uncle. I cannot tell you this."

Evan stared at Zhao Hai, then he sighed, "Alright, you don't need to tell me, I won't ask anymore. But your current disguise isn't enough, there would be some people who could recognize you. Right, you wait here first, I'll come back in a bit." Evan said as he left the study.

Zhao Hai and Laura looked at each other, then they sighed, Zhao Hai shook his head, "It looks like we overestimated our disguise, to think that we would be recognized this early."

Laura just forced a smile, "I didn't think that Uncle Evan would have such sharp eyes. Brother Hai, why did you think Uncle Evan had us wait here?"

Zhao Hai just shook his head "Forget it, let's just see what Uncle Evan is up to, I don't think he would harm us. Let's just wait and see what he wants to do."

Laura nodded, at this time, the study's door opened as Evan entered. In his hands were boxes as well as a stack of papers.

Evan went towards Zhao Hai and said, "Little Hai, before, Uncle didn't have the ability to help you. But now I do, but since I cannot just aid you in front of the clan, Uncle just had these things prepared for you. In these boxes are three magical Elven masks, when used, you won't need to worry about your disguise being discovered. And written on these papers are entitlement rights.

Although it only gave the status of a Viscount, it's already enough to travel outside with. I already prepared this for a loyal servant of mine, so I just slightly changed the name and age so when you use this later on, you won't need to be extra careful."

After finished speaking, he placed the items on the table. The boxes were opened, inside were three thin silk masks, each one had mystical symbols in them.

The papers were used to prove a Viscount's identity, there was also an illustration on the paper, which was naturally the Viscount's family insignia.

Evan was Purcell Duchy's Grand Duke. According to the empire's law, he has the authority to bestow titles. But he cannot bestow the title of a count, he could only bestow the status of Viscounts or Barons, titles for Lords.

Zhao Hai didn't expect that Evan would provide them with these things, especially the mask, which they needed the most.

The Elven mask, as the name suggests, was a mask made by the Elven race. The way these masks were made are unknown and had to do with the Elves' secret methods. When worn on a person's face, it would meld together with their skin. The person wearing it won't need to remove the mask when he wants to wash his face or do other things. The mask had the ability to change its form. It can turn into five different faces and did not need any magic to activate. It only needed to be worn on your face to work.

Of course, this item isn't readily available. In the continent, only great families would have them, but the quantity wouldn't be that many. Only through a fortuitous encounter did the Purcell Clan manage to obtain these three masks.

Additionally, the Viscount title is as equally important to Zhao Hai. Now that Zhao Hai's Buda Clan status, and Laura's Markey family status cannot be used, they could only use Zhao Hai's status as a Mage. Because this identity didn't have any official status,

there were little things that they could do while moving around.

But having this Viscount title would change everything. Although a Viscount is only a low level status among the aristocracy, it would allow Zhao Hai to move around without attracting suspicion. Some merchants from other countries would find ways to obtain a low aristocratic status like a Viscount or Baron to be able to move around in the continent. Although these ranks were low, they were still recognized all throughout the continent. Having these titles makes it more convenient to move around.

From what Evan sees, Zhao Hai would travel the continent with the status of a merchant. So he gave Zhao Hai this title of Viscount, and as he said, he already had this status prepared for a loyal servant, so as long as he changed the age, it would be fine.

This matter is very common in the continent, all noble families would select a loyal servant and bestow them a title. Then they would have the servant help in managing the matters of the house, not only could this increase the strength of the family, it would also attract some people over.

Evan prepares these kinds of papers every year. The papers that he took out were already prepared a long time ago, he just changed the name and age. Zhao Hai can immediately take these to use, his name would be Wales who was 20 years old.

Looking at the items in the table, Zhao Hai cannot help but feel a deep gratitude towards Evan. Just like Evan said, even though he could help Zhao Hai now, these items were the extent that he could do so. Evan was the Purcell Family's head, he held great power, but he needed to consider the clan if he wanted to help Zhao Hai. Evan must make his decisions in accordance to the current situation, after all, he held the entire family on his back.

Zhao Hai was moved by Evan's actions, "I have to thank Uncle Evan for these items. These are very important to me. I'll have you

know that with my present situation, I cannot just show myself inside Aksu Empire, thus I want to head to Rosen Empire and take a look if there are good things there.”

Evan thought for a moment then said, “Good, Rosen Empire is good, Although the situation in the Rosen Empire is complicated, there are big opportunities waiting there. Moreover, compared to Aksu Empire, trade is very lucrative there. Whatever you sell won’t attract suspicions. Unfortunately, I have no friends in Carson City, thus I cannot help you in that regard.”

Zhao Hai smiled, “Uncle has already helped me a lot. Uncle, I have something to give you.” After he said that, he flashed his hand as a space bag appeared. He gave the space bag to Evan and said, “Uncle Evan, this is a space bag, it has ten cubic meters of space in it. I’ll gift this to you.”

Evan was stunned, he knew that the Buda clan didn’t have any space items. And now that Zhao Hai gave him a space item, if he didn’t confirm that the one sitting in front of him was Adam, he thought that he would have made a mistake.

However, Evan didn’t become polite. He nodded and received the space bag and said, “Are you really headed to Iksa Territory? What are you doing there?”

Zhao Hai smiled and replied, “When I was conducting business in the prairie, I met Bell and discussed business with him. This time I want to discuss the cooperation with him.”

Evan frowned, “Bell? Why would you cooperate with that person? This guy is not a good partner, Laura, what’s going on? Adam, no, Little Hai, is it because you didn’t know what kind of person this Bell is?”

Laura smiled, “Be relieved, Uncle Evan, I know exactly what kind of person Bell is. But our cooperation is just selling him things and nothing else. You don’t have anything to worry about.”

Evan nodded, “I just want you to be careful of Bell. Right, this time, Shue’s identity was exposed, won’t this bring trouble? How are you going to deal with this?”

Zhao Hai told Evan his solution. Evan agreed, “Good, let’s do it according to your plans. Tomorrow, I’ll release information that you are a magician who was conducting business in the prairie. When Shue was injured, he went towards the prairie and was saved by you. You came to the mansion this time to ask a title from me. What do you think?”

Zhao Hai thought for a moment and said, “Won’t this make people suspect my identity? After all, Dark Mage Zhao Hai had worked with you in the past. If at this time, I suddenly worked with you, won’t the people be suspicious?”

Evan smiled and replied, “They won’t, don’t worry, every year there would be people I would make deals with, no one would suspect this time. Right, this time you’re heading to Rosen Empire’s Carson City, Ruyen was also coincidentally heading there. Let her follow you along the way, help me take care of her.” There was a sly smile on Evan’s face as he said that.

Zhao Hai and Laura were stunned. Zhao Hai worriedly scratched his head, “Uncle Evan, I have to remind you that I am engaged now. I have two fiancées, one is Laura and the other is Meg. Moreover, I already renounced my engagement with Ruyen.”

Evan just smiled bitterly and replied, “I know that you don’t want to marry Ruyen, she simply isn’t a match for you. But Little Hai, me having Ruyen follow you is also good. She could be a cover for your identity, many people would think that I gave you your title because of your connection with Ruyen. This way, your title would have some sort of justification.”

Evan was aware as to what kind of person Ruyen is, the entire Duchy knows. Laura had stayed in the Duchy for a long time so it’s impossible for her to not be aware. And now, with Zhao Hai’s

capability, as well as having fiancée like Laura by his side, what qualifications did Ruyen have to marry him?

Thinking about these made Evan sigh. Before, Zhao Hai was a spoiled brat, but with his present appearance, he had changed completely and became a talented person who could take care of important matters. But now that Ruyen turned into her current image, Evan couldn't help but feel sad.

Seeing that Evan wanted to insist, Zhao Hai felt it wouldn't be good to decline. He just nodded and said, "Alright, but since we'll wear the mask tomorrow, wouldn't Ruyen not recognize me?"

Evan smiled and said, "Don't worry, I'll tell Ruyen."

Chapter 318 – Travelling Together with Ruyen

Zhao Hai was very dizzy by the time he left Evan's study. For fear of being suspicious, Evan didn't keep Zhao Hai in his study for long. Evan didn't accompany him out, but the matter of Ruyen following them towards Rosen Empire was already finalized.

Although Zhao Hai was against it, there was no other way. To be honest, he didn't want to mingle with Ruyen, but now that became very impossible.

Laura was by Zhao Hai's side, she also didn't have anything to say, She also didn't want Ruyen to travel with them, however, Evan was right that Ruyen would be the best shield for Zhao Hai's status.

At the study's exit, a servant immediately approached Zhao Hai and bowed, "Sir, your carriage is already parked at the front."

Zhao Hai nodded, the group followed the servant to the front door. Zhao Hai and the two stared at the carriage in front of them. This carriage was his, but there seems to be an addition of an insignia on the carriage.

Zhao Hai was stunned, he carefully looked at the badge that Evan gave along with his viscount title. He didn't think Evan would be that quick.

He knew that Evan already prepared the insignia for his servant's promotion to a Viscount. But now, the title was given to Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai's current viscount status that was given by a Grand Duke was very different than an entitlement given by a King. A title given by a King gave you the right to develop your own insignia. A title given by a Grand Duke also gives you the right to make your own insignia, but in the corner of your badge there should be a scaled down version of the Grand Duke's insignia. In

other words, you get the mark of a Grand Duke.

Zhao Hai looked at his insignia, because his title was given to him by Evan, Zhao Hai could see Evan's family emblem on the top-left corner of his insignia.

Zhao Hai gave the insignia a look, then he proceeded to leave the Grand Duke's mansion. He already told Evan that he will leave Casa City tomorrow. So if Ruyen wanted to follow them, she would need to be earlier than them. Otherwise, they will not wait for her.

Evan didn't object, although he had Ruyen follow Zhao Hai as cover for his status, this wasn't his original intention. Though he only interacted with Zhao Hai for a short time, he didn't forget that Zhao Hai settled in Purcell Duchy as a Dark Mage before. Adding Zhao Hai at that time and the present Zhao Hai, Evan knew that his nephew was very outstanding.

Adding on Evan and Zhao Hai's father's relationship, how could he give up having him become his son-in-law? Although Zhao Hai broke their engagement, Zhao Hai forgot that he didn't have any power to break the engagement. Although Evan couldn't change Zhao Hai's mind right now, he hoped that Zhao Hai can get along with Ruyen and see whether they would come to like each other. If they can fancy the other person, then any other issues would be easy to solve.

However, Evan also knew that Zhao Hai couldn't have any liking towards Ruyen. Ruyen was adamant to break her engagement, the Buda Family also knew about this since Green was informed when he came to break the engagement, and it would be impossible for Green to not inform Zhao Hai about it. Thus, Evan can only resort to giving Zhao Hai some help, making Zhao Hai grateful, and hopefully insert Ruyen by his side. If fortune favored Evan, his plans would maybe succeed.

Evan was very clear that if he didn't help Zhao Hai, Zhao Hai could still survive with his current strength, he didn't need to fear

anyone. Especially, when Zhao Hai arrives at Rosen Empire, Aksu Empire's matters wouldn't be able to affect him. Zhao Hai wouldn't need to care about Evan then. Therefore Evan must make use of this opportunity and make situations where Ruyen would get to interact with Zhao Hai. Otherwise, Ruyen wouldn't get many chances to do so in the future.

Fortunately, Evan obtained some information that Ruyen's impression of Zhao Hai seemed to be quite good. Although there was a bit of a clash at Shelley hotel, it seemed to make Ruyen even more attentive towards Zhao Hai.

To Evan, this daughter of him was a headache. He knew that her daughter was spoiled by her mother which formed her bad habits. Although Ruyen was very rude to him before and made him quite angry, she was still his daughter, he couldn't just overlook her future.

Zhao Hai correctly guessed Evan's intentions, but even though it was what he expected, he couldn't just reject Evan's request, so he had no other choice but comply.

They quickly arrived at the hotel before dark. Zhao Hai and the others discussed about their travel tomorrow and then rested early since they had to hurry the next day.

They didn't know that their trip to the Grand Duke's mansion caused quite a stir in Casa City. When their carriage entered the mansion, it didn't have the insignia of a viscount, but when it came out, there was already one. This made the people in Casa City quite puzzled.

The next morning, Zhao Hai and the other got up early. They had their breakfast and prepared to head out of Casa City. When their small convoy left the city, they saw that ahead of them was another convoy.

The convoy was composed of five carriages, on each of them had the insignia of the Purcell Family and along with it were 100

guards. At the forefront of the convoy was a very luxurious carriage, it seems that the carriage at front carried the passenger and the following carriages were packed full with items.

Zhao Hai looked at the convoy and guessed that it was certainly Ruyen's convoy. The young lady's self-image was truly very big. Zhao Hai could only bear with it and force a smile, he made Shue overtake the carriage.

The carriage arrived by the side of the luxurious carriage, the window of the carriage opened and Ruyen's flower-like face appeared. She smiled at Zhao Hai, "Mister Wales, you are late."

Zhao Hai still didn't wear the mask that Evan gave him. He just exited Casa City, there were many people who had seen him in the city. He didn't want the people to see that his face just changed overnight. He didn't want them to be suspicious, so he just maintained yesterday's appearance.

Zhao Hai nodded to Ruyen, "I apologize for making young lady Ruyen wait, let's get going." Then he closed his window and blocked it with curtains, then he had Shue lead the carriage forward.

Zhao Hai was very rude, if it was another person, Ruyen would be raging. But when facing Zhao Hai, Ruyen felt that she just couldn't get angry, she surprisingly smiled and said "Really very stubborn, Jill, follow them." Jill immediately complied, he quickly had the carriage follow Zhao Hai.

Jill actually felt grateful towards Zhao Hai, this was because in the past few days, Ruyen's temper was very terrible. If they were unlucky, they would be whipped suddenly. But ever since Ruyen encountered Zhao Hai, her mood suddenly became better, they didn't manage to get whipped even once since then. Because of this, Jill was very thankful towards Zhao Hai.

The entire morning, they were just quietly hurrying along, Ruyen also didn't look for trouble. When noon came, Zhao Hai's

group just ate inside their carriage then continued along while Ruyen's group needed to stop and eat. Zhao Hai didn't bother her, he only had his carriage go, if she wanted to stop and eat, then she could do so, Zhao Hai will not stop in any case.

Ruyen had no other choice but have Jill follow them. When they went out, they didn't prepare any dry rations, now Ruyen was very hungry.

For Jill, this was not a problem. It was also the same for the guards who followed Ruyen. They were all servants, so this kind of hardship is very normal. If they didn't head out suddenly today, they could still prepare some dry rations. For soldiers, it was common sense to do so. There were times when there was no time to stop to eat a meal, so you can only eat dry rations while on horseback.

Ruyen was a bit annoyed, but she didn't care too much. Her carriage's design was quite similar to Zhao Hai's. It had a cooling box inside, as well as a magical furnace. Moreover, there were also some snacks inside the carriage, so even if they didn't get to eat at noon, she could still munch on some snacks, alleviating her hunger.

When evening came, Zhao Hai arrived at a small town called Blanca. This town's population was quite small, altogether less than a hundred thousand people. But because of the constant traffic, it was very prosperous. Hotels and restaurants could be seen everywhere.

Zhao Hai and the others had found a medium sized hotel called Brown hotel to rest in. Although Brown Hotel wasn't that large, its service quality was very good. When Zhao Hai's carriage parked outside the hotel, two attendants immediately came out to cater to them. They stood by Zhao Hai carriage while bowing waiting for Zhao Hai to exit. Then one attendant led Zhao Hai and the others inside the hotel and helped them to arrange their accommodations. The other one led their carriages to the back of

the hotel to park.

When Zhao Hai arrived at the hotel's resting area, Shue arrived at the reception desk to reserve their room. At the same time, Ruyen also arrived at Zhao Hai's side. Without caring for Zhao Hai's reaction, she sat opposite him and curiously looked at Zhao Hai's face.

This time, Zhao Hai already wore the elven mask. His face changed to his original face back on Earth. An ordinary yet unordinary face, it was the kind of face that was very easy to forget.

However, Zhao Hai's disposition was still arrogant. Which awarded him some points from Ruyen, because of this she just stared at Zhao Hai, somewhat curious. Seeing this, Zhao Hai frowned, "Young lady Ruyen, don't you think that what you are doing is rude?"

Chapter 319 – Who is it? Such Gall!

The young lady Ruyen smiled and said, “I am curious, why does mister use this face specifically?”

Zhao Hai calmly replied, “What’s the difference? What does a face represent? Even if I were handsome, but if I have no strength, what’s the point?”

Ruyen looked at Zhao Hai’s serious expression, she could not help but curl her lip, “Mister, from your appearance, you shouldn’t be a serious person, how come you’re being serious right now?”

Zhao Hai was surprised for a moment, then his complexion changed. He had lost his self-control, he was supposed to act like a dandy, and acting serious wasn’t something that a dandy would do.

Zhao Hai’s expression was clearly seen through by Ruyen, now she became even more curious of Zhao Hai, she didn’t think that those few words elicited such reaction from him. This was another ability of the mask, when changing your face to another one, even the expression made would be reflected to the new face, general disguising items couldn’t do this.

Zhao Hai’s expression turned normal, then he responded as he looked at Ruyen, “That depends on the person, I only put a serious face towards people I don’t like.”

Ruyen felt that Zhao Hai’s words were a lie. If what Zhao Hai said was true, then his complexion wouldn’t have changed. What he said then should only be a cover-up, so Ruyen didn’t get offended by it. Now Ruyen was looking at Zhao Hai with an even more curious expression, Zhao Hai was getting more and more interesting to her.

At this time, Shue arrived, he bowed to Zhao Hai and said, “Young Master, I had arranged twenty low-class rooms for the

guards, I also arranged two high-class rooms each for Young Master and Young Lady Ruyen. Me, Blockhead, and mister Jill would be in a mid-class room.

Zhao Hai shook his head and said, “Arrange mid-class rooms for the guards. You get a high-class room next to mine so that it’ll be easier to issue orders and arrange escape routes.

Shue complied, then he turned around and arrived at the hotel’s reception desk. Before long, the rooms were arranged. Because there were a lot of people today, not only do they to arrange for the rooms but they also need to prepare for meals. Fortunately, Shue was a former mercenary, he was used to these types of things, so the arrangements were quickly done with anything going wrong.

Zhao Hai was now rich, so he didn’t care about money. Like in this hotel, arranging for the meals and rooms for more than a hundred people could cost a few gold coins a day, but it was no big deal.

Although Zhao Hai had the Space, they still needed to put on an act, so he had Shue tell the Brown Hotel to prepare some dried food so that they could have something to eat while travelling.

After everything was arranged, Zhao Hai and the others went to their rooms to rest. Shue also had the hotel prepare their meals, they will meet Zhao Hai at the dining hall for their dinner when it is ready.

Zhao has was now acting as a dandy young master, so when young masters went to a place, how could they just stay in their rooms to eat? They would certainly go to the dining hall to eat while keeping up appearances and showing off. So Zhao Hai didn’t stay in his room to eat today, but went to the dining hall.

However, this arrangement was a great inconvenience to Laura and Meg. This was because according to the continent’s customs, while Zhao Hai is eating his meal, Laura and Meg cannot seat on the table since they were currently acting as ZHao Hai’s

concubines, not wives.

Laura and Meg didn't have any say in the matter, Zhao Hai was currently fulfilling the role of a dandy, it wouldn't be any good if he suddenly became a good person.

In the end Zhao Hai had them eat in the Space first, when they are done, only then did Zhao Hai came out of his room and headed to the dining hall.

In the Dining Hall, the food was already prepared. The dishes were all made with magic vegetables. Although it was winter, there were methods of growing vegetables in house available in the continent. And of course, their prices would be anything but cheap.

While Zhao Hai was just sitting down, Ruyen arrived and impolitely sat opposite him. Zhao Hai couldn't help but frown, he felt very uncomfortable. Laura and Meg, who were his genuine fiancées couldn't sit on the table to accompany him for a meal, but Ruyen just naturally sat opposite him. This made Zhao Hai complain for his current identity.

Although unsatisfied, the act should continue. Thus Zhao Hai can only sit on his table, looking at the dishes at the table, Zhao Hai actually lost his appetite.

Zhao Hai turned to Meg and said, "Gemma, go get me some liquor that we got from the prairie, I want to drink that wine today." The matter of names was already discussed by the group. This time Meg's name would be changed to Gemma. Laura's name was also changed to Julie, Nier's name wasn't changed.

Hearing what Zhao Hai said, Meg knew that Zhao Hai meant to get their Milk Wine. She immediately complied and went out of the room, before long she came back bringing a liquor bag with her.

Human's were used to placing their liquors in bottles or pots,

nobody used liquor bags. On the other hand, almost all beastmen used liquor bags to store their milk wine. This was because of its convenience, using liquor bags while mounted was more comfortable.

Whether they were Ruyen or the other people in the dining hall, they were curious about the liquor bag on Meg's hands. They didn't understand why Zhao Hai suddenly wanted to drink milk wine at this time. Could it be that he thinks that a beastman's milk wine is better than human's fruit wine?

The beastman's milk wine is well known in the continent. Every so often, merchants would bring back rare items from the prairie to be sold the continent. But unfortunately, only a few humans could stomach the taste of milk wine, and with the lack of distillation, milk wine's shelf life wasn't very long. Because of these issues, milk wine wasn't sold in high volumes among the humans.

Zhao Hai didn't care about these, he just dumped the contents of his wine glass and placed it on the table. Meg took the liquor bag and poured Zhao Hai a glass of milk wine.

When the wine poured out, everyone became surprised. Among the people in the dining hall, many of them had drank milk wine before. In their minds, milk wine was white, but Zhao Hai's milk wine was colorless as if it was water.

Then they smelled the wine's fragrance, the fragrance of milk was mixed in with the wine. This was a very unique type of fragrance, it made the people present feel that they were undergoing aromatherapy.

Zhao Hai lifted his glass and took a sip, he nodded and placed his glass down. Then he ate some of the dishes with an expression of enjoyment.

Ruyen looked at Zhao Hai, she was curious of the contents of Zhao Hai's wine glass so she asked him, "Mister, what is that

liquor?” Ruyen had drunk milk wine before, but she didn’t like how it tasted so she didn’t drink it anymore. Today, she looked at Zhao Hai’s cup of milk wine and became curious, this was because the milk wine that she had drank before was different to Zhao Hai’s.

Zhao Hai smiled, “Naturally it’s milk wine, its wine that beastmen produces.”

Ruyen frowned and replied, “But I had drank milk wine before, and it was very different than this.”

Zhao Hai grinned, “This is a specially-made milk wine, even among the beastmen, it wasn’t widely consumed. This wine is much better than fruit wine. Gemma, give young lady Ruyen a cup, have the young lady taste the wine.”

Meg complied, she took the liquor bag, went to Ruyen and poured her a cup of wine, then she returned to Zhao Hai.

Ruyen looked curiously at the liquor in her glass, she took a deep breath and lifted the wine glass. She looked at Zhao Hai’s appearance then took a small sip. Her face immediately turned red, but she didn’t place her glass down, instead she took another sip. Then she put the glass down and ate a dish. She looked at Zhao Hai and said, “Really good, this wine tastes very good.”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and didn’t say anything. He just ate some dishes and drank liquor. When his glass had become empty, Zhao Hai took a napkin and wiped his mouth gently. Then he turned his head to Ruyen and said, “Young lady, take your time, I’m taking my leave.”

There was still half a cup of liquor left in Ruyen’s glass. Although the wine was very good, it was too strong so Ruyen just drank it slowly. Now, Ruyen’s face was crimson red, becoming more charming. But Zhao Hai seemed to not take notice of it, he just got up and left.

Seeing Zhao Hai leave, Ruyen lost her mood to drink. She also stood up and headed back to her room. The rest of the people in the dining hall were looking at Ruyen's half finished cup of milk wine. They believed that if there weren't a lot of people in the dining hall, someone would have already drank the wine left in that glass.

After Zhao Hai returned to his room, he immediately went to the Space to prepare something to eat. He didn't get full back at the dining hall since he didn't feel like eating a meal together with Ruyen. But he still had to put on an act, therefore he just drank his glass of liquor and left the hall.

But he didn't think that as he entered the space, a prompt would be heard. "Camouflage item equipped, supply class, mask type. Can change a person's appearance. Extracting feature, integrating to the Ghost Staff. The host can now use this feature through the Ghost Staff."

Zhao Hai blankly stared, he recalled that he didn't remove his mask. Now he was very curious of this disguise function. So he remove his mask and took out his Ghost Staff. On the skull on the Ghost Staff, mystical symbols could now be seen. Zhao Hai immediately said, "Use disguise function." After he said that, the skull on top of the staff flew out and covered Zhao Hai's head. Zhao Hai was too terrified that he closed his eyes, but in the end he didn't feel anything.

Zhao Hai opened his eye to look at himself and sees that there was no change on his body. But the Ghost Staff now looked like a normal staff, except that it looked like it was made of a green crystal and was very beautiful. The skull on the wand had disappeared.

Zhao Hai arrived in front of a mirror and looked at his face. He saw that his appearance didn't have any difference compared to when he wore the mask. Moreover, another amazing thing was that the skin on his face wasn't any different to the skin of his

neck. It looked as if he wasn't in disguise at all. Now he really seemed to be just like the Zhao Hai back in Earth, except for the skin color and the eye color which was different.

He couldn't help but touch his face. The skin of his face moved along with the force exerted by his hands as though it was always been there. Now he feared that even when a deity came, they couldn't guess that he was actually wearing a disguise.

Zhao Hai smiled, the Space was really very mysterious, it can unexpectedly extract the mask's disguising ability. Laura and the others also expressed their admiration, they were already used to the Space's mysterious abilities, so they were just a bit surprised and didn't take it any more seriously.

After eating, Zhao Hai and the others sat inside the Space Villa's living room. They looked at the situation inside Brown Hotel. They didn't monitor anyone but they already developed this habit. In the evening, they went to the space to sleep, even Shue and Blockhead were also inside the Space.

Zhao Hai looked at the situation outside as he asked Shue, "Shue, had the food and drinks of the guards been arranged?"

Shue nodded and said, "Young master doesn't need to worry, it's already arranged. The guards didn't have any special requests so I had the hotel prepare ordinary meals for them. They had been very satisfied, but they still had ten people casually dressed roaming around the hotel."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "No need to manage them, that is their job. They do that so that we could be free of worries, but you three should make arrangements to have someone pay attention to the hotel's situation and inform us right away." Shue, Blockhead, and Rockhead nodded. When monitoring for the evening, they could just sit in the living room and look at the situation through the screen, a very easy task.

The night was still early, so Zhao Hai and the others washed

themselves up before resting. The Space is very peaceful, the air was also very good, so the people quickly fell asleep.

While Zhao Hai was sleeping soundly, the voice came from the space stone, “Master, Young Master, wake up quickly, something is happening.”

Zhao Hai stared blankly, then immediately sobered up. He quickly walked toward the living room and looked at the screen. The screen showed the current situation inside Brown Hotel, a group of a hundred people surrounded the hotel and rushing towards it.

The Purcell guard placed on guard duty was taken down. It seems that the enemy has used doomed soldiers this time. Zhao Hai turned towards Shue and said, “Go to your room and pretend to be asleep. Come out when you hear sounds from my room.”

Shue and Blockhead complied, then they vanished from the Space to return to their rooms. Zhao Hai seriously said, “Cai’er, come out. After we leave, pay attention to the situation on the screen. These people must be headed for my room, pay attention and detect the invisibility magic used by the doomed soldiers.”

Cai’er complied, and looked at the hotel’s situation with bright eyes. Zhao Hai and the others appeared on the hotel room and laid down on their beds, waiting for the enemy’s arrival.

Although these people had not entered the hotel yet, Zhao Hai already believed that they should be heading for him. Otherwise, they wouldn’t just attack the hotel. For the hotel to be attacked tonight isn’t common, Brown Hotel didn’t open just a day or two ago, they were an established institution inside Blanca. If they were attacked like this from time to time, then they would have a hard time keeping their business up.

At this time, Cai’er suddenly said, “Young Master, they had come, in front of the door is a stealthed doomed soldier.” Zhao Hai sat up from his bed and took out the transformed Ghost Staff.

Then he called out, “Who is it? Such gall!”]

Chapter 320 – Eight Armed Demon

After shouting, Zhao Hai waved the staff in his hands, then a one meter diameter Fireball flew towards the hotel door. Boom! The entire hotel shook, then outside Zhao Hai's door, a pitiful yell could be heard. Naturally, the doomed soldier's sleath had been broken by Zhao Hai's fireball.

At this time, the door of the room right next to Zhao Hai's opened, Blockhead and Shue were carrying their weapons, "Young Master, what happened?"

Zhao Hai loudly said, "Some doomed soldiers attacked, I already killed them."

Zhao Hai's voice was too loud the the entire hotel was alarmed. Ruyen's guards grabbed their weapons to took action, they didn't even have time to wear their armors.

Jill ran up to Ruyen's room, holding what looked to be a rapier. It seems like Jill wasn't just an ordinary servant.

At this time Ruyan also stumbled out of her room and looked at Jill confused, "Jill, what happened? Why is it noisy?"

Jill replied, "Your highness, someone just attacked Mister Wales. But Mister Wales already took care of it. The night guards we sent to patrol earlier seemed to have met unfortunate ends."

Ruyen was smart, so she immediately sobered and turned to look at the scraps of Zhao Hai's door which he destroyed with a fireball. Her face became ugly then she commanded, "Immediately send someone to see who dared to attack."

At this time, Ruyen's two maids also arrived, on the hands of one of the maids were a set of clothes, she turned to Ruyen and said quietly, "Your highness, put some clothes on first."

Ruyen was currently wearing her night garments. Moreover, they were the sexy type of night garments. The hotel was currently

chaotic, it would not be good if someone ran over and saw her.

Ruyen nodded, then returned to her room and quickly wore her clothes. After a short while, she went out of her room and asked Jill, “How is Mister Wales’ condition?”

Jill replied, “He’s alright, mister hadn’t exited his room yet, Shue went out to deal with the enemies. But the attackers seriously underestimated mister. They didn’t know that Mister was a Fire element Mage.”

Ruyen started, then she nodded, “Looks like mister is really formidable. Mister is a Fire element Mage, his maid is a wind element mage, and his carriage driver is Shue of a thousand shadows. Who knows how strong the driver of his other carriage is.”

At this moment, battle cries could be heard outside, and before long the sounds vanished. Then Shue walked in from the outside, he quickly went to Zhao Hai’s room, “Master, it has been taken care of.”

Zhao Hai nodded, then he went out of his room, already wearing his clothes. Laura and Meg followed behind him. The group walked toward the courtyard of the hotel. Ruyen also hastily followed them. Her guards were holding their weapons while being extremely vigilant.

Zhao Hai quickly arrived at the courtyard, there a fat person had already been waiting for them. When he saw Zhao Hai come out, the fat person quickly ran toward Zhao Hai, Shue stopped him from going further.

The fatty immediately stopped, then he greeted Zhao Hai, “Respectable mister, I am the boss of Brown Hotel. Sir, I must apologize regarding the earlier matter. I ask mister to believe me when I say that it had nothing to do with our hotel.”

Zhao Hai was sizing up this fatty. The fatty was wearing very

magnificent clothes with perfectly combed hair. Sweat could be seen hidden along his fat head, but there was no expression on his face, it made him look very weird.

Zhao Hai felt that something was a bit wrong, but he just couldn't put his finger into it. At this time, footsteps could be heard, Zhao Hai turned around and sees Ruyen. Ruyen's head was very messy, her clothes looked like they were worn hastily. This surprised Zhao Hai, but he immediately knew what was going wrong.

He turned to the fatty and said, "You are the boss of this place?"

The fatty immediately nodded and said, "Yes sir, I am the owner of this long-established place, Brown."

Zhao Hai nodded, then when he sees that the fatty relaxed, he suddenly told Shue, "Kill him". Shue stared blankly, but immediately took action, his axe striked towards the fatty's head.

The fat boss suddenly demonstrated a flexible body-maneuvering technique that looked strange when coupled with his body. His body moved, avoiding Shue's axe. But he seemed to forget Shue's nickname, a thousand shadows. As soon as his body evaded, a whole troop of shadows suddenly appeared around him, making the place extremely packed. On their hands were similar axes, eyeing the fatty maliciously.

Feeling that he had no other place to go, the fatty suddenly cried out and his figure moved. Clothes fell off of his body, and when the people's attention were still on his garments, a small and thin man suddenly emerged and threw himself towards Zhao Hai. Simultaneously, he raised his arm and sent cold lights towards Zhao Hai as well as striking with his two hands.

Shue saw the situation and cannot help but be alarmed, "Eight armed demon! Young Master, be careful!"

As his voice fell, Zhao Hai suddenly became surrounded by four

stone golems, each to his four sides. The stone golems looked like walls keeping everything off from Zhao Hai who was in the middle. Following the 'dang dang' sound after the cold lights hit the stone golems, two huge golem hands went and captured the small and thin figure.

The small and thin form immediately stopped, then he pitifully yelled, "Surrender, I surrender, I'll take a blood oath and follow you, please do not kill me!"

Zhao Hai became surprised, then he waved his hand, making the golems vanish. However, the small figure still couldn't move, his body looked to be bound by invisible chains, he cannot move whatsoever.

The discerning people among the crowd could tell that this was wind element magic. Everyone was shocked, presently, Zhao Hai had used two elements of magic. Adding on to the fireball he casted earlier, it would make him a three element Mage.

Zhao Hai looked at the small figure, he turned to Shue and said, "Shue, you know this guy?" Ruyen was also observing the man, he wasn't very tall, maybe 1.5 meters tall. He was very thin, he probably weighed less than a hundred jin. He wore black clothes, his head was wrapped around with a black cloth only revealing his two eyes. On his backside was a very short stabbing sword, it wasn't even right to call it a sword, maybe just a long dagger.

Shue looked at the captured person then turned to Zhao Hai, "Young Master, this person is a very famous freelance Assassin with a nickname of Eight-armed demon. His name is Shun. And while he didn't have a divergent ability, he held techniques of doomed soldiers. His unique skills are related to hidden weapons. Nobody knows where he hides his hidden weapons, but no matter what he could manage to bring them everywhere. He has formidable skills of disguise, and can act as anybody for a short time, making him very difficult to deal with. Being an assassin, coupled with the quick skill of his hidden weapons and his

formidable strength, he could whip up weapons as though he has eight arms, thus people called him the eight-armed demon.”

At this time, Shun shouted, “Right, I am the eight-armed demon. Mister, can I know how you managed to see through my disguise?”

Zhao Hai looked at Shun and faintly smiled, “Your costume was very well made, but do you think that the hotel’s boss could still organize his clothes and tidy himself while his hotel was having an accident?”

Shun stared for a moment, then he sighed, he didn’t think about that. Zhao Hai looked at him and asked, “The hotel boss?”

Shun breathed helplessly and replied, “In his room, knocked out.” Zhao Hai nodded and didn’t care anymore, he turned around and told Shue, “Bring him to my room.”

Zhao Hai nodded to Ruyen then headed to his room. His room’s door was broken but luckily Shue was just staying right next door, and his door was still intact. Zhao Hai immediately entered Shue’s room. Shue carried Shun in his arms, Blockhead shut the door and acted as a guard.

Zhao Hai sat down, he looked curiously at the small and thin Shun, “Who sent you?”

Shun shook his head and said, “I don’t know, I was at a restaurant when I got the task, I didn’t know who hired me.”

Zhao Hai looked at Shun, “What is your task? Kill me?”

Shun shook his head and replied, “I wasn’t asked to kill you, they only said to attack you. Regardless of what happened, as long as I am able to escape, then I can obtain ten gold coins as commission. They also probably sent someone to monitor us, if someone didn’t come, then they would pay for it.”

Zhao Hai became surprised, then with a gesture, a screen appeared in front of him. Zhao Hai carefully looked at the projection, then he asked Cai’er, “Cai’er, did you find the

monitoring person?”

Cai'er appeared on Zhao Hai's shoulder, she shook her head and said, “I presently cannot, there are many people in the hotel. The monitoring person could be a resident of the hotel, there are currently no means to find out.”

Zhao Hai nodded, then turned the monitor off. He paid no attention to the dumbfounded Shun, instead he turned to Laura and asked, “Laura, why did you think they sent people to attack me, without taking my life?”

Laura knit her brows, “From the task, they seem to not want to kill you, only probe. I just don't know what they are probing for.”

Zhao Hai frowned, “Who was it? We're currently disguised and didn't have any enmity with others. How come some people suddenly want to attack me?”

At this time, Blockhead who just stood there silently, talked, “Young Master, someone is probing to see if you know dark element magic!”

Chapter 321 – Apologizing

Blockhead's words made Zhao Hai and the others stare. At this time, Blockhead continued, "Look, we just came back from the prairie and immediately got a title from Grand Duke Evan. All of these meant that we had a common ground between the Grand Duke and the prairie. Before, the only person who had a relation between the Grand Duke and the prairie was the Dark Mage Zhao Hai. Therefore, today's mastermind wanted to see whether Young Master is a Dark Mage. If they proved that you are a Dark Mage, they could know of your identity which would be very troublesome for us."

Zhao Hai and Laura looked at each other, then they nodded. They felt that Blockheads speculation was spot on, otherwise, there wouldn't be any plausible explanation for today's attack.

Then Zhao Hai turned his gaze towards Shun. He looked down and said, "You should have guessed who I am right about now. Well, do you still want to be my follower? If you do, I won't treat you any worse than Shue. But if not, you should know how I do things."

Zhao Hai's method was widely known in the Purcell Duchy. They knew that he liked to turn people into undead, making them his eternal slaves.

Naturally, this method was also widely used among Dark Mages. This was the reason that any ordinary person didn't annoy Dark Mages for no reason. Nobody liked to die and have their corpse serve others in eternity.

Shun knelt on the ground and said, "Yes, I am willing." Then he bit his finger and made a blood oath. Zhao Hai's body felt the same way as the time when Shue made his blood oath. Now, Zhao Hai believed that he was not deceived.

Zhao Hai looked at Shun and said, "Good, you're now my

follower. Shue, take him, explain to him the rules here.” Shue complied, then he led Shun out.

Zhao Hai looked at Blockhead who was beside the door. He smiled and said, “Blockhead, who would’ve known that you would think of things we hadn’t thought of.”

Blockhead laughed, “It’s because the Young Master thinks of too many things, so it’s natural to miss things from time to time. My brain is very simple, it doesn’t need to think of many things. So I accidentally thought of it.”

Zhao Hai laughed, “You guys are getting more and more interesting. Right, we didn’t get much sleep tonight. I think the enemy wouldn’t dare make another move, go get some rest.” Blockhead nodded and walked out.

Like any other high-class hotel suite, there would generally be three-four rooms in each accommodation. Brown Hotel’s high-class suite had three rooms, Shun, Shue, and Blockhead lived in one room, Laura, Meg, and Nier lived on another, and Zhao Hai occupied the third. In fact, even if their arrangements were like this, they actually prefer resting inside the Space. But because of tonight’s situation, they chose to not go to the Space, they just rested on their hotel rooms.

While Zhao Hai’s group rested quietly, the rest of the people in the hotel didn’t get any sleep. The hotel owner Brown was rescued from his room. He wasn’t harmed, but he was in shock. After knowing of what just happened, he was even more distressed. He didn’t know how to explain to Zhao Hai what happened tonight.

Brown himself had a bit of background, he was the Blanca town lord’s wife’s younger brother. Because of this, he was able to open his hotel. But Blanca’s town lord is only a viscount, a rank similar to Zhao Hai’s. Even more, from Ruyen’s carriage, the Purcell family emblem had been hung. They were people that Brown couldn’t offend, but they were attacked on his hotel, Brown

thought that he was already dead deep in his heart.

At the same time, Ruyen's heart couldn't calm down. She didn't expect that Wales turned out to be a three element mage. On the continent, having a skill in one element is considered as average talent, knowing two elements were considered to be geniuses. Knowing three elements, however, was a very rare talent in the continent, most people wouldn't even see one in their entire lives.

However, even if one was a three element mage, they would still major in a single element, otherwise they would be very distracted in their studies. But looking at Zhao Hai, he was a three element mage, but it looked like his spells were high ranked in all elements. What did this mean? It meant that he had very high innate talent for magic.

Originally, Ruyen was very proud of herself. Although she was still young, she was a talented Water Mage who reached the 6th rank, this achievement was considered rare in the continent.

However, over these two days, she felt her confidence being attacked. Not to mention Zhao Hai being a three element mage, Meg who was beside Zhao Hai wasn't any weaker than her, this made her disappointed with herself.

Ruyen sat down in her room, her two maids were standing behind her while Jill and another warrior was standing opposite her. Ruyen looked at them calmly and said, "What do you think of what happened tonight?"

The warrior looked at Ruyen and replied seriously, "That group was obviously after Mister Wales, but I think that group of people didn't belong to any organization or group, like Eight-armed demon Shun, he was a very famous assassin in the continent but he was a paid hand, he didn't join any group. He was a very hard to deal with character, I heard that besides his hidden weapons and disguises, he is also very proficient with poison. The weapons on his arsenal are all poisonous. His employment showed that

tonight's attack mostly involved mercenary assassins, those who receive cash for tasks."

This moment, Ruyen frowned, "Doomed soldiers are also mercenaries? How come I haven't heard of mercenary doomed soldiers?"

The warrior calmly replied, "There are some of them in the mercenary circle, some escaped from their Clans and some rebelled. They would even sometimes find a wife outside and later bear a child which they would pass their skills to. This situation isn't unusual."

Ruyen nodded, he turned to Jill and asked, "You were with Shue and Blockhead's room tonight, did you manage to get any information?"

Jill shook his head and said, "I didn't, after eating their meal and returned to their room. Their lights were immediately turned off, and no sound could be heard from then on. I called them later, but they said they were too tired and needed to rest, unwilling to come out."

Ruyen knitted her brows, "I just want to know what father told them, why he gave them the viscount title, and why father had me travel along with them. This matter is really strange. Right, how many night guards were incapacitated? How many were killed?"

The warrior replied, "All were killed, there are no living witnesses left. It seemed to be under the hands of another doomed soldier, they only have one wound on their neck, their throats were sliced by a sword. It wasn't Shun's doing also, or else he would have used his poisonous hidden weapons."

Ruyen nodded, "Cremate their corpses and send their ashes back to the Grand Duke's mansion. Tell father to give their families some compensation." The warrior nodded.

Ruyen continued to frown and said, "Tonight's attack is too

strange, Mister Wales' identity is too mysterious. No matter what, we should be more careful for a few more nights. Increase the number of night guards by a few more people." Jill and the warrior nodded.

Ruyen looked at the two, "You go back and rest, send some people to patrol tonight. Jill, Mister Wales is currently in your room, go rest with the guards tonight." Jill complied, then he asked to be excused.

Watching Jill leave, Ruyen murmured to herself, "Things are getting more and more interesting, hehe." Then she yawned and went to her room to rest.

The next day, Zhao Hai and the others woke up quite late. Zhao Hai's body wasn't very good so he needed a good rest, so he slept till it was late.

After they washed up in their rooms, they came out of their suite just to see a fat figure standing outside their door. When he saw them come out, the fat man immediately went to greet Zhao Hai, but he was blocked by Shue and Blockhead. The fat man could only stop and bowed his body and said, "This little Brown has seen Sir Viscount. Sir Viscount was frightened yesterday, this one apologizes deeply to Sir Viscount."

Zhao Hai looked at the fatty, this fatty looked the same as the fatty that Shun just imitated. But this one had very bloodshot eyes and a very sweaty face, he wore an expression as though his mother just died.

Zhao Hai calmly replied, "It's nothing, I don't blame you. Those people came for me. I apologize to Mister Brown for destroying a few things in your hotel."

Brown's body bowed even lower, "This little one had heard the Viscount. This one is very happy. This one has prepare some liquor to get over the shock, I invite the Viscount to the dining hall."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, then he headed towards the dining hall. When he entered the dining hall, he saw Ruyen sat there drinking tea. She was in the middle of drinking tea when Zhao Hai entered, Ruyen immediately place his cup down and stood up. “Mister came, how was mister’s rest?”

Zhao Hai calmly replied, “Fortunately well, young lady, please take a seat.” After having said that, Zhao Hai sat down.

Fatty Brown who was at their side bowed, “Your Highness young lady, Sir Viscount, this one specifically prepared liquor and some dishes to overcome yesterday’s shock. I hope you two could accept my invitation.”

Ruyen didn’t speak, she looked at Zhao Hai, giving the decision to him. Zhao Hai calmed the nervous Brown, “Good, Boss Brown doesn’t need to be polite, let them serve it. We’ll leave after eating. Just as what I said before, I don’t blame you, you don’t need to be so nervous. When we head down, we’ll provide the payment for our rooms.”

As soon as Brown heard Zhao Hai’s words, he immediately replied, “This one wouldn’t dare, the room charges could be considered to be my apology. Right, I’ll excuse myself and make the staff serve the food. I invite the Your Highness Young Lady and Sir Viscount to take your time.” Then Brown bowed and went back.

Chapter 322 – Shun's Family

After eating their breakfast, the group returned to their rooms and prepared to leave. Naturally, Zhao Hai paid for their accommodations. This matter involved a nobleman's pride, he must pay for their rent, he had to, given his current identity. Not paying the rent is unbecoming for a young master such as him.

After boarding their carriages, they slowly left the town of Blanca. Shun sat by Shue outside Zhao Hai's carriage to drive.

Today, Shun dressed normally. He wore ordinary warrior's clothes, he looked very normal while sitting beside Shue.

Shue told him yesterday about Zhao Hai's ability as a mage. He told Shun to not dare betray Zhao Hai, or else face being turned into an undead.

Shun didn't want to be turned into an undead, thus he acted obediently and asked about Zhao Hai's dislikes. Because of this, he just wore ordinary clothes today.

One could say that Shun wasn't ugly, he had a childish face and adding on to his small stature, it made him look younger than his actual age.

Zhao Hai also asked about Shun's capabilities. Shun could use stealth techniques, wield poisonous hidden weapons, and disguise himself, he was someone born with the innate abilities of a successful assassin. Moreover, his fighting strength isn't weak. His strength was that of a 6th rank warrior, but during assassinations, he could deal with 7th ranks easily.

Regarding Shun's strength, Zhao Hai was very satisfied. Adding on to the fact that Shun made a blood oath to him, Zhao Hai believed that Shun wouldn't dare deceive him. However, Zhao Hai still decided to observe Shun for 1 or 2 days, after which he would bring Shun to the Space. If Shun wasn't loyal, Zhao Hao wouldn't

be merciful and simply turn him into an undead. In any case, he could still keep his abilities when he becomes an undead.

Shun was very obedient, he also recognized his own situation, he was currently Zhao Hai's slave. He wouldn't be able to survive if Zhao Hai wanted him dead, so for his own good, he naturally would be loyal.

At noon, they had a simple lunch. But their lunch was much better than the Ruyen's which were just ordinary dried food. Zhao Hai's group had mutton and mutton soup.

These mutton and mutton soup were the remainders from back in the prairie. When they set out for war, Wales killed all of their argali to be made into food. When they won the war, they obtained too many argali, naturally Wales wouldn't want to keep consuming mutton and mutton soup. The remainders were still kept with Zhao Hai, enough for them to eat for quite a long time.

Now that the continent was still in winter, the temperature was cold. Naturally, warm mutton and hot soup would taste better in such conditions.

In the evening, since they didn't manage to find any hotels, Zhao Hai and the others decided to rest inside a small village. This village's name was Cat Ear village. It had a few dozen families and the highest ranking official was the Village Chief. The village chief wasn't appointed by the empire. In the village, there was a very common surname. The village chief was that family's patriarch, holding the highest authority for the village.

However, in the eyes of a noble, a village chief isn't an official at all. The people in the village hadn't even seen a high official before, the highest authority they saw could only be the tax officer who came from the city to collect taxes, and that tax official isn't even an aristocrat. So when the village people saw Zhao Hai's group, especially their weapons, they were very terrified. And after hearing that Zhao Hai was a Viscount and Ruyen was a Duchy's

young lady, every single person became scared as they knelt on the ground, kowtowing repeatedly.

They tried their best to cater to Zhao Hai because they were terrified. The Village Head even lent his house for Zhao Hai's stay.

Zhao Hai wasn't polite, he immediately occupied the house and asked the Village Head to have the women of the village to prepare some food. The Chief immediately complied, he hastily asked the women to prepare some food for Zhao Hai's group. Zhao Hai left the dishes to the women's hands.

However, he also had Meg supervise their job. These women can cook ordinary dishes, but they hadn't seen Zhao Hai's magic vegetables before, so they didn't do what to do with those. Fortunately, Meg was there and before long, the food was cooked quickly.

After dinner, Zhao Hai went to his courtyard to rest, Shue and the others followed. Since Zhao Hai's group wasn't large, a small courtyard was enough for all of them. Meanwhile, Ruyen's group was large, so they occupied three large courtyards by themselves, some even couldn't sleep indoors since each house can only hold about ten people.

After returning to his courtyard, Zhao Hai didn't immediately rest. He sat by the living room and drank some tea as he observed the ornaments in the room. Even if this house was considered as a high-grade house, the ornaments inside the living room were still ordinary, one could understand that the inhabitants weren't living better lives.

However, Zhao Hai didn't feel bad for the villagers. In his mind, they were also living good lives, they get to eat and wear warm clothes. One must know that back on Earth, in 21st century China, there were still places in China where people are living the same kind of life. So relatively speaking, the villagers had it good, considering how backward in technology the Ark Continent was.

At this time, Shun went towards Zhao Hai and kneeled, “Young master, this one had performed the blood oath with you, this one had also been very obedient. I request the young master to have this one visit his family for just a short while.”

Zhao Hai was surprised, then he looked at Shun and asked, “You are married? How many members are there in your family?” In Zhao Hai’s mind, people like Shun rarely married. Because if one day they fall while doing a task, their families would certainly suffer.

Shun nodded, “I am, this one had gotten married. There are five people in my family, besides this one, I have an old mother, a wife, and two children.”

Zhao Hai said, “Where is your family right now?”

Shun immediately replied, “Tomorrow, we should pass by this one’s home. The home isn’t quite far from a small village. This one had bought a few mu of land in that village, doing only a few trades with the village so the village people would not know of this one’s identity.”

Zhao Hai nodded, “Very well. How about this? We’ll pick your family up then bring them to my territory.”

Shun stared for a moment, then he immediately responded, “Thank you, young master, from here, my house would take two hours of travel. But my family’s village isn’t along the main road, we still need to take a side route to reach my home.”

Zhao Hai nodded, he watched the sky then turned to Shue, “Shue, go fetch my carriage and meet Shun’s family.” Shue nodded, then went and fetched Zhao Hai’s carriage which made Shun surprised, he didn’t know any other noble who would allow their servant’s family to ride their carriage.

Looking at Shue and Shun leaving the village, Laura turned to Zhao Hai and said, “Brother Hai, are you not afraid of them

escaping?”

Zhao Hai just smiled and said, “Aren’t they under blood oath? Where can they escape to? Also, I placed the Ghost Staff inside the carriage, so if they run into trouble, we can immediately arrive at the carriage.”

At this moment, a knock came from the door followed by Jill’s voice, “Is mister Wales here? Her highness wanted to ask whether mister left.” They also saw Zhao Hai’s carriage leaving the village, so they came to ask.

Blockhead opened the door and asked Jill to enter. Then when Jill saw Zhao Hai sitting in the living room drinking tea, he relaxed. He went forward and immediately gave Zhao Hai a salute,”Mister Wales, the young lady saw your carriage leave and thought that maybe something happened, so he sent this one to inquire.”

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “We made the young lady worry, there’s nothing wrong. I just let my two servants do something, they’d be back in a while.” Jill nodded, then asked to be excused.

Looking at Jill leaving, Laura couldn’t help but pout, “Brother Hai, it seems that young lady Ruyen had become attached to you, do you have any idea what to do?”

Zhao Hai sighed, “What do do, she followed us very well. Anyway, when we reach Rosen Empire, she wouldn’t be able to follow us anymore. Also, it wouldn’t be good to Uncle Evan if we just left her.”

Laura smiled, “I think that the young lady is heavily paying attention to you, looking at her actions these past few days, even her previous attitude has changed, it wouldn’t be easy.”

Zhao Hai sighed again, “How could she change, me and her are just casually travelling together. Forget it, let’s talk about Shun, I didn’t think that he would be married. Also, do you think that

Shue is also married? His age isn't that small."

Hearing what Zhao Hai said, Laura just laughed. This time, it was Meg who talked, "Young Master, why are you worrying too much about these? You aren't even married."

Zhao Hai also laughed, "I have two fiancées, can't a full man know a hungry man's thoughts? I was just worried for Shue."

When Laura and Meg heard what Zhao Hai said, they couldn't help but look at Zhao Hai and snort. Zhao Hai laughed, the women also laughed, everybody became very jolly.

While the group was chatting, time unconsciously passed and the sky slowly turned dark. Although this village didn't have any magic lamps, they still had oil lamps. But Zhao Hai actually didn't light their lamp, and instead went inside the Space, he looked at the screen to observe Shue and Shun.

Shue and Shun were chatting while travelling. Shue asked about Shun's family, and Shun asked Shue about Zhao Hai. Shue mouth was very solid, not revealing any unnecessary information. He just repeatedly advised Shun to never betray Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai was observing the two while they were going along the road. When they left Cat Ears village, they travelled for a while before they went down a fork in the road. After going along for a while, they saw village lights in the distance.

Seeing the village, Shun couldn't help but reveal a gentle gaze. He turned to Shue and said, "Brother Shue, this is my village, my father was a doomed soldier before. But he was injured and decided to stay here, I got my skills from him. My mother was a medicine master in the village, but didn't formally study potion making. She only used the herbs in the mountains to cure the people's illnesses. She also knew how to make poisons, there were many poisonous plants in the mountains, and their toxicity was very strong, I learned by poison making from her. Later on, my father died because of his old injuries, so I went to the City to find some jobs.

After a few years of doing missions, I managed to get my hands on some money and bought a few mu of land. Then I had a wife and two children. Because of them, I opted to do less dangerous missions if possible, nor could I go too far from the village. Most of the time, I do some farm work in the village, I think this life is good.”

Looking at Shun’s expression, Shue smiled, “If you really think so, then even more reason for you to not betray the young master. As long as you stay in the Young Master’s good side, you would find out later that it was the best decision of your life.”

Shun forced a smile, “Perhaps, but I just don’t want my children to be slaves in their lifetime. But I already made a blood oath with master, so I have to follow him now. Without my support, my family couldn’t survive. I can only depend on the young master to find them somewhere to settle in. I just don’t know where the young master would take them.”

Shue looked at Shun and said, “Don’t worry, I assure you they would be sent to the best place in the world. For commoners like us, it would be heaven.” Honestly, Shue couldn’t think of any other place better than Iron Mountain Fort. There, they all work together to improve their lives and support their children. They would have food to eat everyday, and didn’t need to worry about their food in the future. If such a thing isn’t heaven for an ordinary commoner, then what is?

Shun sighed, he didn’t speak, his mood was very complicated right now. He is very aware that even though he had bought some land, it was just enough to live by. If he wanted his family to live better, the family could only rely on him to work much harder. But now he became Zhao Hai’s subordinate, and if he left, the family would lose their main source of income. So he can only force himself to ask Zhao Hai for some time to settle his family. But he didn’t think that Zhao Hai would volunteer to take the family to his territory. It was a matter of worry and joy for Shun, since his

family would have some sort of security.

What worried him was what would happen to his family members when they reach Zhao Hai's territory. If they become slaves and Shun somehow falls, they may starve to death, this bothered him very much.

After talking with each other, the two finally entered the village. It was a small village about the same size as the Cat Ears village. Behind the village was a mountain, which seemed to be the mountain that Shun talked about. As soon as they entered the village, a low level magic beast which looked like a dog back on earth barked at them, Even though the magic beast looked like a dog, its combat capability was miles ahead of Earth's dog, it was a magic beast after all.

Shun pointed at a tree inside a courtyard and said, "There is my home."

Chapter 323 – Trap

Shue looked at the direction that Shun had pointed to. He saw a very typical farmhouse courtyard wall built with stones. The courtyard wasn't large, and because of the winter, you cannot clearly see what is inside it.

In it were four clay houses, ordinary commoners would construct these types of houses, only few made their houses using stones. Clay brick houses were warmer compared to stone houses, therefore their houses were generally made of clay brick.

The sky was already dark, and at the distance a small light could be seen, maybe to provide warmth. However, Shue suddenly felt that something was off.

At this moment, Shun's ears suddenly moved. He could hear something different coming from his family's room, it sounded like the friction of a full body armor. This made Shun stare blankly, when he was about to set out, a voice suddenly told him, "Don't make unnecessary moves. Your family has been taken hostage. You'll bring them more harm if you go."

This was Zhao Hai's voice, Shun couldn't help but be surprised. He clearly remembered that Zhao Hai didn't go with them. Shue was already accustomed to this, he said, "Young Master, why did you come?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "I didn't plan to come originally, but seeing Shun's family being held hostage I had to. Stop the carriage, Shun's family is surrounded by ten people, all the family members are in the same room with one person inside as a lookout. The remaining nine are outside preparing for an ambush. It appears that they are completely ready for Shun. Weird, they seem to have just arrived, did they know that Shun will come back today?"

Naturally, Zhao Hai saw Shun's family's situation through the monitor. He just didn't understand why the other party decided to

set up an ambush here. According to Shun, his family should be very well hidden.

Zhao Hai turned to Shun and said, “Shun, are there other people who know where your family are? If not, how did they trace your family? Looking at their appearances, they should know about your identity. Otherwise they wouldn’t send such people to deal with you. Moreover these people had shields as well as full body armor. They were obviously guarded against your hidden weapons.”

Shun froze, and after a moment he shook his head, “Nobody should know about my family. I generally act alone, and even though this village isn’t that remote, nobody would generally come here. So how could other people notice my family?”

Zhao Hai nodded, “Very well, no use getting bothered over it. First, we need to save your family, then we go deal with those guys.” Zhao Hai waved his hand, then a monitor appeared showing the situation with Shun’s family.

Shun’s mother, wife, and two children were grouped up at the east side of the house. Another man who wore a shield and full body armor was standing by the door, coldly staring at the family.

Shun’s eyes couldn’t help but turn red. Zhao Hai talked with a deep voice, “Cai’er, deal with that fellow, don’t make any noise.” Cai’er complied, then under Shun’s gaze, a vine silently appeared behind the armored man, then the vine turned into an extremely sharp point and aimed at the person’s head. His head was punctured, then his body trembled and didn’t make any sound anymore. The vine didn’t immediately retreat, instead it wrapped around the warrior’s body. The vine was always behind the warrior, so Shun’s family wasn’t able to see it.

Zhao Hai nodded then said, “We’re good.” His hand moved, then the three immediately appeared in front of Shun’s family. As the family see Shun and was about to shout, Shun immediately

stopped them, “Don’t make any noise, come with me.” Zhao Hai instructed him to say this.

Seeing Shun, the family immediately nodded and tightly closed their mouths. Then they vanished from the room, Zhao Hai brought them to the space along with the warrior that Cai’er killed.

After entering the Space, Shun and his family members just stared. Zhao Hai looked at them and then smiled faintly, “Well, Shun, this is our greatest secret. After knowing this, you wouldn’t be forgiven if you betray me.”

Shun quickly said, “Young Master can be assured, ever since I have followed you, I didn’t even think of being disloyal. This time, I want to thank Young Master for saving my family.” After saying that, Shun introduced his family members to Zhao Hai.

Shun’s mother is named Suju, his wife is called Nalan, and his two children are called, Shungan and Shunliu. After hearing the children’s name, Zhao Hai almost couldn’t stop himself from laughing. The names Shunliu and Shungan were too domineering, Zhao Hai almost asked Shun if he had participated in the Sino-Japanese War.

Zhao Hai nodded, then sat down with the group inside the Space’s villa. Zhao Hai turned the screen on and the group looked at the courtyard. The armored group was ready for an ambush. Although they only faintly surrounded the house, it was clear that they intend to seize the victim in one fell swoop.

Zhao Hai looked at the people, then he said seriously, “Look at what these people are wearing, it looked like they aren’t any ordinary mercenary. Their armor are very refined, it seems like they are employed by a big family. Shue, what do you think?”

Shue looked at the screen for quite some time before he said, “Right, even though they didn’t wear any emblems, you can see that their weapons and armor are made in the same style. Ordinary

mercenaries simply don't use these kinds of equipment."

Zhao Hai nodded, "Seems like a powerful figure had their eyes on Shun. We'll capture these guys later, I want to know who wanted to deal with Shun."

Shun felt touched while looking at Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai knew that it was already late, so he turned his head to Shue and said, "Shue, arrange two rooms for Shun's family. Then we'll go take care of those guys, we still need to go back to Laura and the others."

Shue nodded, then went and settled Shun's family down. And since Zhao Hai was afraid that they still didn't have their dinner, he gave them some food to eat. He also told them to go to the bathroom and wash up. Not for long, the family exited the living room.

Seeing the other warriors, Zhao Hai turned to Shue and Shun and said, "Shue, Shun, remember their locations." The two confirmed, then Zhao Hai sent the two of them outside.

As soon as they arrived outside, Shue immediately released a hundred shadows, Shun also prepared his hidden weapons, then the both of them carefully walked towards the house.

When Shun entered the courtyard, the waiting warriors immediately jumped from their hiding spots and surrounded him. On their hand were big shields, two of them were actually holding crossbows loaded with bolts.

It seems like they were completely prepared to deal with Shun. They knew that Shun was very mobile, therefore they prepared crossbows and bolts to cope with him.

Seeing the situation, Shun pretended to be shocked, then he talked as his expression changed, "Why are you here friends? I didn't offend any of you, right?"

One of the warriors said, "Enough spouting, your family has fallen to our hands. Comply obediently, my family's master has

some words to ask you.”

At this time, footsteps could be heard outside the courtyard which caused the group to be surprised. Shun immediately made his move, he quickly had his weapons take out the crossbows from the hands of the two people, since they held the most threat. Taking those crossbows out would make everything easier for Shun.

Since the group are experienced in battles, they quickly sobered up from their shock. The two who held the crossbows immediately held their shields up. But this way, they couldn't take a proper shot. At this moment, Shue came rushing in.

These warriors aren't very strong, they were only about 6th rank. But since they are wearing armor, general hidden weapons cannot penetrate them. Adding on to the fact that they held Shun's family, they dared to face him.

However, with the help of Shue, whose strength was comparable to them. The group immediately got captured, this time they were captured, not killed.

Shue and Shun brought the captives to Zhao Hai's carriage. When they entered, they saw the corpse of the warrior that was killed by Cai'er. Seeing the puncture wound caused by the vine, the group of warriors immediately thought that it was caused by Shun's short sword.

Zhao Hai sat in front of the warriors and looked at them, he smiled faintly and said, “You people, tell me why you wanted to attack my follower, is it against my follower or to me?”

When the group of warriors heard Zhao Hai, they didn't say anything. Each and every one of them tightly closed their mouth, looking like martyrs.

Looking at their appearance, Zhao Hai couldn't help but smiled, “Not talking? Very well, you are currently wearing full body

armor, what would happen if I grill your armor with fire? What do you think would be the effect?”

After Zhao Hai said that, the groups faces immediately paled. They didn't think that Zhao Hai would be that cruel, their armor were all made with metal plates.

If such armor was roasted with fire, they would naturally become barbeque.

At the same time, Zhao Hai wielded his Ghost Staff. A head sized fireball appeared and flew towards one warrior.

The warrior's face immediately lost its color, the he said hastily, “I'll talk, I'll talk! Please don't burn me.”

Zhao Hai also looked at the other warriors. The group of warriors looked at each other and knew that they couldn't escape. They immediately nodded and said, “We'll talk, we'll also talk.”

Zhao Hai turned his head to Shue, “Shue, take them inside the house and interrogate them one by one. If two people says different things, inspect the others and find out who lied. When you find out who lied, kill him.”

This was the first time that Shue encountered this type of interrogation. The group now knew that there really wasn't any other way to fool Zao Hai. They immediately complied, Shue took four people to the house and interrogated them one by one. These warriors didn't dare to speak untruthfully, each of their faces showed bitter expressions.

Chapter 324 – Spring Grass Residence

Sitting in the carriage, Zhao Hai observed as Shue took each person to the room one by one. After a few moments of interrogation, Shue placed all the warriors in front of Zhao Hai as he said his report, “Young master, from the interrogations, these fellows were sent by Southern King to Blanca Town, tasked with probing us if we are Dark Mages. When the plan in Brown Hotel didn’t succeed, they began to trace Shun’s origins. They wanted to capture Shun, and through him they could better understand our situation. Knowing that Shun frequented the town, they concluded that he had family nearby. And through the Blanca’s town lord, they finally found Shun’s home. They knew that when Shun became your follower, he would certainly return to settle his family. Therefore, they waited here for him, but were instead caught by us.”

Zhao Hai nodded, then he turned his head to Shun and said, “Shun, what do you want to do with these fellows?”

Since they dared to hold his family hostage, Shun certainly wouldn’t be merciful. Therefore he told Zhao Hai, “Young Master, I leave it to you.”

Zhao Hai nodded, he looked at the warriors and turned his head back to Shun, “Shun, you can’t return here again, you don’t need this house anymore. Let’s burn it.”

Shun was stunned, although he was a bit sad, he nodded. He also knew that Zhao Hai was right. He wouldn’t be able to return to this place again in his entire life.

Seeing him nod, Zhao Hai waved his hand, a few wind blades appeared and chopped the heads off of the warriors. Then he had Shue quickly stack their bodies inside the house and produced several fireballs as well as an Inferno spell for good measure. Shun’s house immediately went up in flames.

Zhao Hai didn't turn the warriors into undead as he didn't lack undead right now. So he killed the warriors and dumped them here, doing this also reduces other people's doubts about his identity.

Looking at his own home slowly getting burned, Shun's heart was very gloomy. But he knew that he couldn't come back here anymore. Finally, he turned his head and went with Shue towards the carriage.

When they left the village, the other people in the village became aware of what happened to Shun's home. Rural people were a very tight knit group, they would take care of each other, especially in this case where a fire happened. Each resident took action to put out the fire, but unfortunately this was magical fire, it wouldn't be easy to exterminate. In the end, they could only watch as everything burned down to ash and as the fire also slowly grow weaker.

The villagers cannot extinguish the fire, but they also didn't see Shun's family. When the fire extinguished itself, they went towards the house and looked at what remained. Inside the house were distorted armors, a few discerning eyes also noticed some burnt bones inside those armors. The villagers knew that something had to have happened here and didn't dare intrude anymore. The village chief quickly rode to Blanca and sent his report. Later on, the town lord heard the report and in turn Southern King also was informed. But at this time, Zhao Hai was already no longer in Purcell Territory.

That night, Zhao Hai returned to Cat Ears village and rested. When Ruyen saw Zhao Hai's carriage return, she didn't say anything. The next morning, after eating their breakfast, Zhao Hai's group immediately left the village. Cat Eats village, even though it was a small village, managed to make Zhao Hai feel comfortable and warm.

When those villagers first saw Zhao Hai's group, they became

nervous, but he could also tell that the people wanted to treat them well, which moved Zhao Hai. So when he left the village, he gave the village lord ten gold coins as compensation for their stay. But the village lord became frightened instead, saying that he wouldn't dare accept such money. In the end, Zhao Hai forced him to accept the money, and when he received the coins, he repeatedly kowtowed to Zhao Hai.

One could say that the villager's life wasn't any good. But since the tax in Purcell Duchy is not high, they could still dress themselves and eat warm meals. And with this ten gold coins, the villagers could manage to have a good winter.

The group were slowly moving forward. Zhao Hai told Ruyen to not disturb him, then he called Shun over to the carriage. Afterwards, he had Laura and the others enter the Space and meet Shun's family members.

Shun's family was also awake right now. They hadn't stayed in a place as nice as this before, therefore they didn't dare touch any other things and just stayed in their rooms. Naturally, because of this, they still didn't have their breakfast.

Zhao Hai had them eat then took them to Iron Mountain Fort to arrange for their place to live in. He also brought Shun here to explain their current situation. Shun came to know that Zhao Hai was from the infamous Buda Family of the Aksu Empire, and the place they were in was the Black Wastelands.

Although he was surprised, Shun quickly accepted the reality. After all, he was already Zhao Hai's blood oath follower, he was stuck to him for a lifetime. Then Zhao Hai led Shun around to get him accustomed to the matters in the Fort.

Looking at Iron Mountain Fort, Shun was surprised to see so many Beastmen everywhere. Additionally, Iron Mountain Fort was warm even though it was winter, this fact didn't give him any small amount shock.

Afterwards, Zhao Hai made Green arrange Shun's two children to go to school and assign Shun's family a house. After being busy the entire day, they returned to the carriage.

The next days passed by without much accident. One could say that the road from Casa City to Iksa Domain was very peaceful, there were no bandits present and unless some people were especially targeting you, there were no dangers.

After travelling for another two days, they finally entered Iksa family Domain. Iksa Domain was slightly inferior to the Purcell Domain. The family controlled a medium size city and three small cities. Bell lived on the Domain's only medium sized city, Sarte City.

The Iksa Family Patriarch's title was a Marquis, a bit less than a Duke, even more less than a Grand Duke. But the Iksa Family was an old noble family and had existed for more than a thousand years, so even though they didn't flex their power these days, they were not actually weak. Their territory also touched borders with the Beastman Prairie where they gained so much money from smuggling. But since the first target for a beastmain raid to the human territory would be the family's domain, their hands were basically tied.

After arriving at the Iksa Domain, Zhao Hai still needed to pass a small city before entering Sarte City.

Zhao Hai's group entered the small city and rested for a day. On the second day, they rushed to Sarte City. Travelling from the small city to Sarte City would only take about one day. Thus, when they left the small city, they managed to arrive at Sarte City by the next evening.

However, Zhao Hai didn't go and find Bell after arriving. They booked themselves in a hotel first and sent Shun outside to gather information to prepare for the visit to Bell tomorrow.

Even though they were already inside Iksa Territory, the customs

and local culture did not differ from Casa City. But this was normal, since the two domains were under the same empire, therefore there shouldn't be any difference.

The next morning, Zhao Hai's group woke up early. Today, they were going to meet Bell. Ruyen's group also didn't stay in the hotel, after all, she was a Grand Duke's daughter. So she needed to visit the Iksa Family since the two families' relationship was good.

After breakfast, Zhao Hi got on the carriage and immediately headed towards Bell's residence. Bell's residence was very famous inside Sarte City, known as Spring Grass Residence.

Listening to its name, one could think that the residence wouldn't be large. But the city's people was very clear that Spring Grass Residence is considered to be one of the biggest mansions inside Sarte City. The entire house covered ten mu of land, it was only smaller than the city lord's mansion, making it very famous in the city.

The carriage arrived in front of Spring Grass Residence. The residence's door looked very ordinary, not having any special additions. The door was closed and did not have anybody in front.

Shue and Shun stopped the carriage. Shun went down and gently knocked on the door. Footsteps can be heard at the other side, then a person wearing servant's clothes opened the door and looked at Shun as well as the carriage behind. Then the servant immediately asked respectfully. "Mister is?"

The servant can perfectly judge the quality things. His eyes could see that Zhao Hai's carriage was made of lightwood. Moreover, an emblem of a Viscount could be seen hanging from the carriage, so naturally he wouldn't dare be disrespectful.

Shun smiled faintly and said, "I'll have to trouble little brother to pass a message to the house master, tell him a friend from the prairie came to visit."

As soon as the servant heard Shun's words, he was slightly surprised, then he immediately said, "Please wait a minute, I'll go immediately send the message.". Then he turned around and ran towards the courtyard.

Zhao Hai wasn't worried, he just sat inside his carriage quietly. After a while, rapid footsteps could be heard from behind the door. When the door was opened, Bell immediately walked out. When Zhao Hai saw Bell come out, he also immediately went out of his carriage.

Bell saw the giant-horned bull that pulled the carriage and didn't doubt Zhao Hai's identity, but when he saw Zhao Hai's appearance, he was stunned.

Seeing Bell's reaction, Zhao Hai couldn't help but smile, "Brother Bell, in order to move around easier, I had to change my look. What's wrong? Can't recognize me?"

Bell quickly nodded, "I really can't recognize you. Brother, I have been waiting for you for a long time. You finally arrived, please come in." He gestured his hand and guided Zhao Hai towards his mansion.

Bell's mansion was very unique, Zhao Hai had not seen something like this before. Upon entering the mansion, you are met with a stone paved martial arts field. The mansion's entrance had a stretch of lawn and although it was winter and the grass had turned yellow, one could still picture an image of spring.

Chapter 325 – Calci Family

Bell and Zhao Hai quickly arrived at Spring Grass Residence's courtyard. Here, only the most important friends of Bell could enter, so naturally Zhao Hai would be among them.

After the group arrived inside and sat down, Bell looked at Laura and the others and laughed, "Dressing up like this, I really couldn't recognize you, but this is also good, now nobody would pay attention to you, hahaha, otherwise it would be really troublesome." Zhao Hai knew that he was just joking, the group just laughed.

Bell looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Brother Hai, regarding the Herculean Bull's information, I really didn't think that the Radiant Church would actually return to the prairie. When I received the information, it was already too late to inform you."

Zhao Hai smiled, "It's alright, actually, this time I came because I have a lot of information to give you. Pass this information to the league." Then Zhao Hai told Bell about the brainwashed beastmen children as well as the Ultimate Weapon program.

Bell clearly didn't know about this information, his complexion became heavy as he talked, "There's actually such a thing, it was fortunate that you are able to get these. I think that the the league was also in the dark about these, this is very important information."

Zhao Hai just smiled, "Helping the league is good, now that we are of the same group, we have a common enemy. So naturally I would tell the league information about them, I just don't know if the league could do anything about this information."

Bell smiled and replied, "Rest assured, these intel that you gave won't be in vain, the league will reward you. If you want money, the league would provide money, but if you don't, you could turn them into contribution points. If you want some information, you

could obtain them through these points, you won't need to spend money. And you can get more than information, there are many advantages."

Zhao Hai smiled, "Listening to you, it seems like you want me to exchange them to contribution points? Alright, change them. Let's discuss about our milk wine cooperation, what do you think? Do you want milk wine?"

Bell replied, "Of course, I already had the preparations in place. As long as you send the milk wine, I could immediately continue on to distribution. We should also make the system more refined, so that we could sell it at a proper price."

Zhao Hai nodded, "I'll hand that matter off to you, but I need to tell you that the delivery point should be on or near the prairie so that other people would not suspect. I don't want them to know that the milk wine had any relation to me."

When Bell heard what Zhao Hai said, he knew that this was the matter that Zhao Hai cared about. He smiled and said, "This is easy to handle, I have an outpost in the prairie, you can send your milk wine there, I'll give you the map for it in a while. That outpost had been with me for a long time, and the tribe has a partnership with me, you don't have to worry."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "That's good. How many milk wine do you think your shop can sell?"

Bell thought for a moment then said, "Our initial agreement is good, a thousand jin for the first month, and when the market catches on, we'll buy more."

Zhao Hai nodded, "That is good, you'll be my partner in Aksu empire. But now that I'm heading to Rosen Empire, I need to find another partner. Do you have any connections there? It'll be better if they have a relationship with the league, otherwise, I'll be going blind when I arrive there."

Bell smiled, “There is enough market in the Aksu Empire which can bring revenue to the league, I alone wouldn’t be able to swallow it. Have you considered it already?”

Zhao Hai smiled bitterly, he didn’t know what to say. Bell was a fanatic believer and is willing to give anything to the league. Compared to Bell, his contribution to the league is very small.

Seeing Zhao Hai’s expression, Bell moved on, “Let’s consider that matter finished, right, did you say Rosen Empire? What city, Carson City? If you go to Carson City, I don’t have any connections there. That place contains both snakes and dragons, it’s not a good mix of people. In Rosen Empire’s port city, Sky Water City, the city lord is a member of the league. If you go to Sky Water City, you can get in touch with him and have him cover for you, then you won’t have anything to worry about.”

Zhao Hai froze for a moment, he didn’t think that the league really had connections in the Rosen Empire. Moreover, it was with a City Lord, Zhao Hai quickly urged, “Quickly, tell me about him.”

Bell nodded, “Sky Water City is an important port city of the Rosen Empire. It was ruled by the ancient Calci Family. The Calci Family is a very influential family inside Rosen Empire, they had members serving in the army as well as the imperial court. But many people didn’t know that the Calci Family only reached their current standing due to their previous military exploits. They initially began by serving as doomed soldiers and most importantly, Dark Mages. It could be said that their family was brought up by Dark element Magic. Currently, there are a lot of Dark Mages in the family, possibly because of their bloodline inheritance. When someone from the family develops a talent for magic, it would almost always be an innate talent with the dark element. Because of this, they obviously would be a member of the League of Dark Mages, and at present, their family provided the largest contributions to the league. Moreover, their family also held several seats for the league’s elder congregation. One could

see that the Family had become a backbone of the league even back during its establishment. The league and the family were inextricably linked to each other.”

Zhao Hai was surprised, he didn't expect that there would be such a family of Dark Mages. Good, this was really good for Zhao Hai. With Calci Family's help, Zhao Hai believed that what happened in Purcell Duchy wouldn't be repeated in Rosen Empire.

Zhao Hai nodded, “Good, I'll go to Sky Water City. I'm going to Rosen Empire mainly to do business anyway. It'll be the same everywhere, and Sky Water City is a port city, trade would be more lucrative there.”

Bell smiled, “Right, I'll write you a letter of introduction for you later. In the meantime, let me tell you about the matters of the Calci Family, so that when you get there you won't be clueless.”

Zhao Hai smiled, “Then I'll have to trouble you.”

Bell replied, “It'll be my pleasure, you also gave me some intel as well as the milk wine business, this would be a lot of help for the league, I'll tell them about this.”

Zhao Hai smiled, “Thanks, when you hand me your stronghold's map later, It'll take two days before the milk wine will be prepared for delivery. Remember to tell you people in the prairie that I won't be personally be delivering the milk wine. I still need to head towards Rosen Empire.”

Bell smiled, “You are very busy, right, I'll give you the money later, maybe you'll find use for it.”

Zhao Hai declined, “No, we'll do it according to our previous agreement. Only pay me when the goods arrive. Give the money to the person in charge of the delivery, no need to hand it to me personally.”

Bell nodded, and then he looked at the sky and said, “It's already near noon. Let's have a meal here first, let me express my

hospitality, but you'll have to provide the liquor."

Zhao Hai laughed, "Don't worry, I'll take care of the liquor."

Bell immediately ordered his servants to prepare lunch, and of course, to prepare good dishes. There were a lot of people in Spring Grass Residence, this included Bell's family, he had six wives and a few children. Including the servants, the total number present reached the hundreds.

And also, being a prolific merchant, Bell also had a lot of guards. For someone of his status to not have guards would be preposterous, there were guards wherever you went inside the mansion.

When noon came, their lunch was already prepared. Bell also used this time to introduce his seven children, three sons and four daughters, to Zhao Hai. Bell's children were very young, with the eldest only at 14 years old, they still couldn't help Bell manage his business.

Looking at it, Bell already considered Zhao Hai as his peer, otherwise he wouldn't introduce his family to him.

Regarding Bell's hospitality, Zhao Hai didn't have any complaints. The two of them were allies in the same organization, moreover, they were business partners, so their relationship was very good.

Meanwhile, Ruyen's trip to see the Iksa Family Head wasn't going as smoothly.

When Zhao Hai left in the morning, Ruyen also went out of the hotel. She sat on her own carriage and went towards the Marquis' Mansion which was not far. Although the two clans' relationship wasn't too deep, they still had plenty of interactions in the past. Thus, when she arrived in Sarte City, Ruyen had no other choice but make a visit.

And also, for Ruyen's convenience, Evan had her bring some gifts

to give out. These gifts were all put together by Evan to give away to certain families or groups. Evan had Jill manage these so Ruyen didn't have to worry.

Ruyen sat in her carriage as it approached the mansion. The mansion was more stylish than Spring Grass Residence. It had a wall more than three meters tall and a four meter tall gate. By the gate were two guards, one for each side. On the gate, the Iksa Family's insignia could be seen, a majestic galloping horse.

Ruyen's carriage stopped right in front of the gate, a servant went towards Ruyen's carriage and greeted, "Welcome, her highness Ruyen." Then the servant personally guided the carriage towards the main mansion.

When the carriage arrived at the mansion, a young man could be seen walking out. The young man looked over 20 years old, he had a pair of glossy eyes with long eyelashes, and he wore a Noble's robe. His hair was properly combed, and had glasses worn on his eyes. He also had a somewhat pale complexion. The young man was Iksa Family's first in-line, Fernand Iksa.

This young master Fernand was quite well known in Sarte, not because of his ability, but because of his libido.

Young master Fernand, although still 22 years old, already had a wife as well as concubines surpassing 20. Moreover, he also had at least seven sweethearts in Sarte. His romantic matters could fit inside a book.

This day, when Fernand heard that the Purcell Family's young lady Ruyen would come visit, he was very excited and was the first to rush out and meet her. He was also clear that this young lady was very infamous inside Casa City as having relationships with many young masters, and that she liked men of distinguished backgrounds. Fernand thought of himself as a man of distinguished background, so how could he let go of this opportunity.

Ruyen just disembarked from his carriage when young master Fernand arrived, he looked at Ruyen's flower-like appearance and his heart couldn't help but jump. He immediately greeted her, "Fernand came late, beautiful princess Ruyen, please forgive me."

Ruyen's eyebrows twitched, she looked at Fernand and said, "Young master Fernand is too polite, I wouldn't dare blame the young master."

Fernand looked at Ruyen's face, his heart was jumping crazily, but he didn't dare be too rude so he replied, "Princess, please come in, I have sent someone to inform father, I believe father will arrive soon."

Ruyen chuckled and said, "I wouldn't dare trouble the Marquis." Then she lifted her hand gently, Fernand almost didn't understand what was happening, then he quickly extended his arm and lead Ruyen towards the mansion.

Jill and the others also followed the two immediately, holding gifts in their hands. But they also knew of the young lady's personality, so they didn't dare be noisy, they just silently followed the two.

They quickly arrived at the mansion's living room. The ornaments inside the living room were very magnificent. And standing inside the living room were six maids. When they saw Fernand come, they immediately became busy, they brought hot towels and prepared hot tea, they also lit the fireplace to keep the place warm.

Fernand hesitantly let go of Ruyen's hand, he asked Ruyen to sit down and said, "I didn't know of princess' visit, I had been disrespectful. For the princess to visit the mansion, what matters are you handling here?"

Ruyen showed a faint smile and said, "I'm just passing by, I must head to Rosen Empire to study. But my father didn't trust me, so he had me follow a Duchy's Viscount. The Viscount had come here

to visit Bell to discuss some matters. So I decided to visit Uncle Robert at the same time and send some gifts that father prepared.”

Fernand replied, “So the princess was actually headed to Rosen Empire to study. The mountains are high and the road is pretty rough, how could the Grand Duke allow you to travel to Rosen Empire at these conditions?”

Ruyen just smiled and said, “This time, if we wait till spring to head towards Rosen Empire, I’m afraid that I wouldn’t be able to finish my admissions before the beginning of the school year.”

Chapter 326 – Robert

Fernand quickly replied, “Right, I actually forgot about that. The Rosen Empire Institute’s admission has very strict requirements. However, I believe that with the princess’ natural talent, admittance is not a problem.”

Ruyen covered her mouth to chuckled, “Come on, what talent. You hadn’t seen talent until you meet the Viscount that I travelled with. Even though he is just over 20 years old, he actually knows wind, earth and fire element magic, a three-element mage. Moreover, his talent in the fire element is very good, an absolute genius.” She said with twinkling eyes.

Seeing Ruyen’s expression, Fernand’s heart felt uneasy. Fernand already considered Ruyen as his prey, but now in front of him, Ruyen was praising another man. He couldn’t stop his expression from turning ugly.

At this time, footsteps could be heard approaching. Then, while he still hasn’t passed through the door yet, a man’s voice was heard, “Hahaha, little Ruyen, Uncle hasn’t seen you for quite some time.” The man said as he strode into the room.

Entering the door was an over 40-year old man. His body wasn’t that tall and he looked thin and weak. He wore a noble’s clothes and had worn transparent eyeglasses, he looked quite attractive. He was the patriarch of the Iksa Family, Robert Iksa.

Although Robert is still 45 years old, he was already a 7th rank Wind element Mage. Moreover, he started managing the family at 25 years old so he was already the family patriarch for 20 years. In the past two decades, although the Iksa Family didn’t have much to show, they made lots of money by taking advantage of their border with the beastman prairie by smuggling and collecting private taxes.

Iksa Family was different to Purcell Family. The Purcell family

had an Elder's assembly to restrain their patriarch, while the Iksa family, however, did not have an Elder's assembly. This meant that Robert, as the Iksa Patriarch, had complete authority in the domain.

Robert and Fernand had different personalities. In his life, Robert only had one wife and one concubine, which was his wife's maid dowry. Because of this, Robert couldn't get used to Fernand's actions, but his wife is alright with it so he couldn't do anything about it.

Seeing Robert arrive, Ruyen and Fernand immediately stood up and gave a salute. Robert nodded and looked at Ruyen, "Well, little Ruyen had already grown to be a lady. The last time I saw you, you were still 7 years old, that was way back in the past. Right, how is you father?"

Ruyen smiled, "Father is well, this time he made me visit uncle personally and give uncle a gift, Jill."

Jill took a box and walked forward, in that box was a very well-made magic staff. Robert was a Mage, so it was natural to gift him a magic staff.

Robert received the gift with a smile. Then he turned his head to Ruyen and asked, "Ruyen, what matter made you visit this time?"

Ruyen quickly replied, "Nothing, I was just passing by on my way to Rosen Empire so study. Father didn't trust me in travelling alone, so he had a Duchy's Viscount accompany me. But the Viscount came here to discuss business with Bell, so I felt that it was best to come visit you along the way."

Robert smiled, "Is it? Your father was actually willing to send you far away to study? Well, I need to learn from your father. Maybe I should also send my disappointing child away to study."

Fernand's face turned bitter, he had the same situation as Ruyen. In their Domain, he was someone, but if he went to a big place

such as the Rosen Empire, he wouldn't have any status, and he knew this quite clearly.

Ruyen just smiled and said, "Father was saying that I needed to go out and get some experiences, hehe."

Robert smiled, "Right, gathering experience is a good decision. Ah, this old man couldn't chat with you for long. Fernand, accompany little Ruyen around that mansion. At noon remember to come back and have your lunch here."

After saying that he stood up and left. Seeing his father leave, Fernand relaxed. Normally, Robert was very strict to him, always giving him lessons, this made Fernand develop a habit of being nervous whenever his father was around.

Ruyen looked at Fernando's appearance, her heart couldn't help but despise him. Before, if she saw someone like Fernand, she would be in the mood to tease him. But after meeting Zhao Hai, she didn't have that feeling anymore.

Ruyen also clearly saw the fire inside Fernand's eyes. So she deliberately boasted Zhao Hai's qualities in front of him. He wanted to annoy Fernand and at the same time bring some small trouble to Zhao Hai.

Ruyen had eaten a few losses by Zhao Hai's hands, and Zhao Hai also hadn't given her enough face, so her heart felt very annoyed. And now looking at Fernand's actions, she was sure that if she always talked favorably of Zhao Hai, this playboy Fernand would certainly look for trouble, wanting to flex his masculinity. Ruyen wanted to see how Zhao Hai would deal with this matter.

Fernand invited Ruyen to explore the mansion and to take a good look at Sarte City. However, while on the road, Ruyen didn't stop giving praises to Zhao Hai. This made Fernand very mad.

For a playboy like Fernand, it was very unbearable to have a woman he fancied continue to praise another man, let alone in

front of him. As time passed by, Fernand's face got even more ugly.

When noon came, Fernand led Ruyen back to the mansion to have their lunch. The two were told to head to the dining room where Robert was already waiting for them.

The meal was a very pleasant experience, Robert had been the patriarch for 20 years, so he had met countless amounts of people. So naturally, he would know how to make the table's atmosphere very enjoyable. In addition to Robert's efforts, the dishes presented were also very good, Ruyen was very pleased with the meal.

After having their lunch, Robert left again to deal with his busy schedule. Ruyen wanted to go explore the city with Fernand, but instead Fernand said that he wanted to see the Viscount that Ruyen was travelling together with.

Hearing what Fernand said, Ruyen couldn't help but laugh inside. At the same time, she brought Fernand to the hotel where they were staying at.

Since Zhao Hai chose this hotel to stay in, naturally it wouldn't be bad. Since he was currently acting as a young master, it was natural that he wouldn't go to low quality hotels, thus he chose to live in luxury.

When the two arrived at the hotel, except for her guards, Ruyen saw that there was only Blockhead. Since Blockhead was supposed to be Zhao Hai's supply carriage driver, he didn't have the status to come with him to see Bell. Ruyen led Fernand to her room and immediately sent someone to get Blockhead.

Although Blockhead didn't know what was happening, he still came. He went to Ruyen's room and gave a salute, "This one had seen the young lady, what does the young lady need me for?"

Without waiting for Ruyen to speak, Fernand stood up and gave Blockhead's face a slap. Blockhead touched his face and gave a puzzled look at Fernand, "Who are you? And why did you hit me?"

Fernand looked at Blockhead's expression and proudly said, "It was your own undertaking. Seeing the princess but not kneeling? And seeing the Marquis' successor and didn't salute? So why shouldn't I hit you? What kind of lord has such a subordinate, looking at you tells me that your lord is not that good."

Ruyen didn't expect Fernand to use his title for such petty matter. It was the lowest thing that a Nobleman could do. Ruyen couldn't help but look down on Fernand even more.

However, to cause Zhao Hai trouble, Ruyen held back and only looked at Blockhead. Blockhead was very angered right now, he wished that he could draw his sword and kill Fernand immediately, but for Zhai Hai's sake, he held back.

He endured, but Zhao Hai didn't need to. As Blockhead was about to give Ruyen and Fernand a salute, a voice could suddenly be heard, "Marquis' successor, such great power and prestige. But what is your actual title right now?"

When seeing Zhao Hai coming through the door, Ruyen didn't get frightened. This was the effect that she was waiting for, she wanted to know how Zhao Hai would solve this matter.

Fernand also looked at Zhao Hai. What he saw was an ordinarily dressed man that had a very ordinary appearance. When he heard Zhao Hai, Fernand knew that he was Blockhead's lord, thus he couldn't help but snort and said coldly, "So you're saying that the heir of a Marquis can't scold you?"

Zhao Hai looked at Fernand, even though he had no idea what happened, when he saw Blockhead being hit, he became enraged. One must know that Blockhead was already in the Buda Clan even before their tragedy struck, Zhao Hai already considered him as his brother, and now that his brother had been hit, he just couldn't let this matter slip.

Hearing what Fernand said, Zhao Hai couldn't help but smile, "A Marquis' title is very high, but I do know that his successor's title

wouldn't be at same level, so what right do you have to teach my servant?"

Fernand's expression changed, although his father was a Marquis, his title wasn't that high up, only a Viscount, the same as Zhao Hai. Him wanting to teach Zhao Hai's servant was indeed too excessive. It was a manner of, before beating the dog, find out about the owner. When he berated Blockhead, he also hit Zhao Hai's face. This was a taboo for Nobles.

Although it was a taboo, Fernand didn't care. In Sarte City, he could afford to be domineering, he wouldn't care about a small Viscount.

Chapter 327 – Escalating Conflict

Fernand looked coldly at Zhao Hai, “I’m is still a Viscount, so are you saying that a Viscount can’t scold a servant?”

Zhao Hai smiled, “Of course a viscount can discipline a servant, but to scold my servant? You are a bit unqualified. And since you hit my servant, then it wouldn’t be excessive for me to hit yours too, right?” Then he waved his hand and sent a Wind Blade towards Fernand’s servant who was standing behind.

Fernand didn’t think that Zhao Hai would actually deal a heavy hand. The servant’s reaction wasn’t slow. When he saw Zhao Hai attack, he immediately circulated his Battle Qi throughout his body.

However, Fernand’s servant was just a 5th rank warrior, so his Battle Qi’s defensive properties were very limited. Additionally, the Wind Blade that Zhao Hai sent had a force equivalent to 7th rank. Therefore, although the servant’s was quick in circulating his Battle Qi, he couldn’t block Zhao Hai’s wind blade. Along with a pitiful yell, the servant’s arm fell to the ground.

Fernand saw his servant’s pitiful condition and his face couldn’t help but whiten, he said, “Good, such boldness, daring to act unruly inside Iksa Domain. You must be tired of living.”

Zhao Hai smiled coldly, “For me to be tired of living isn’t for you to say. Blockhead, let’s go.” Blockhead nodded, then followed Zhao Hai to leave Ruyen’s room.

Ruyen was frightened, she didn’t think that Zhao was that ruthless and would chop a servant’s arm off. Moreover, at this point, Zhao Hai had developed a hatred for Fernand, she expected this matter to not end well.

Ruyen also didn’t expect Fernand to be that crude and taunt Zhao Hai further even after seeing the latter’s ability.

Fernand's face was pale, he didn't expect Zhao Hai to not give him any face. This made him very embarrassed. Even since he was born, there was nobody inside Iksa domain who dared to neglect his face.

Even though he couldn't bear it, he didn't bring enough guards. Even if he went to find Zhao Hai, he wouldn't be able to deal with him, he already lost too much face. Fernand can only snort, then he lifted his foot and walked out. The servant followed Fernand, he suppressed the pain in his arm by sealing the wound with his battle qi, stopping the blood from flowing out.

Ruyen didn't think that things would reach this point. Looking at the severed arm on the ground, Ruyen couldn't help but sense fear. She suddenly thought of that time back in the Purcell Duchy when he threatened Zhao Hai and was almost killed by his follower. She knew that Zhao Hai didn't care about status, he wasn't afraid back in Purcell Duchy, so why should he be afraid in Iksa Domain?

Thinking of this, Ruyen felt regret. The matter had gone out of control. It may even lead to Zhao Hai and Iksa Domain having a full-blown conflict.

Although she wanted to teach Zhao Hai a lesson, she didn't want him dead. The current situation between Zhao Hai and Fernand wasn't the thing that was on her mind.

While Ruyen was secretly regretting, Shun appeared outside Ruyen's door, he said, "Your Highness Ruyen, Sir Viscount has invited you to discuss about something."

Ruyen froze, then she quickly nodded and replied, "Alright, I'll go." Then she stood up and followed Shun towards Zhao Hai's room.

Zhao Hai was sitting in the living room while waiting for Ruyen. As soon as he saw her, he nodded and said, "Young lady, please take a seat."

Ruyen looked at Zhao Hai, then she said, “Mister, you’re being too reckless this time. We are in the Iksa Family Domain, being in conflict with Fernand isn’t a good idea. Although Fernand isn’t that favored in the Iksa Family, they still wouldn’t let you off if you continue to be in a fight with him.”

Zhao Hai only calmly looked at Ruyen, “Princess Ruyen, I just wanted to know why Fernand hit Blockhead? Is it really because he didn’t give an appropriate greeting?”

Ruyen’s heart was beating fast when she heard Zhao Hai, she clearly knew the true reason why but she just can’t say it. She lowered her gaze and said, “What does mister mean? Is mister suspicious of me? You can call your servant over and have him testify to what happened.”

Zhao Hai looked at Ruyen then calmly replied, “If young lady Ruyen says so, then naturally it is so. But the young lady also saw that I’ve been embroiled in a great trouble. Thus, young lady will not be safe travelling with me anymore. It would be better for our two groups to separate. I will send word to the Grand Duke later. Shun, please lead the young lady out.” Then Zhao Hai closed his eyes and ignored Ruyen.

Ruyen froze for a moment, she didn’t think that Zhao Hai would use this method to get rid of her. She quickly argued, “You can’t do that. My father asked you to take care of me. How dare you leave me! Do you think my father wouldn’t dare confiscate your title?”

Zhao Hai opened one eye and looked at Ruyen, “I don’t care, if he takes it back, then take it back. I didn’t ask your father for the title anyway, he was the one who willingly gave it to me. If he wants to confiscate it then him confiscate it.” Then he started ignoring Ruyen again.

Before Ruyen said anything, Shun went to her and gestured his hand, “Princess, please.” Ruyen glared, then she snorted and turned away.

Looking at Ruyen going out, Laura couldn't stop herself from asking, "Brother Hai, do you really want to drive her out and let her go on her own?"

Zhao Hai opened his eyes and looked at Laura, "Take care of her? How would I do that? Staying with her would only give us more trouble. I don't want to spend entire days managing her life, she's a walking disaster."

Laura didn't have anything to say, Ruyen was really like what Zhao Hai said, a catastrophe. It was clear that Fernand was looking for trouble. But he wouldn't be looking for trouble for no reason. It was very certain that the cause was Ruyen, anyone but a fool could notice it.

Meg was worried, "Young Master, can Bell really talk with the Iksa Family? If he couldn't, then what do we do? Do we really have to fight it out with them?"

Zhao Hai can only smile faintly, "I think Bell should be able to talk to them. He had been in Sarte City for many years. His business is also big, and it wouldn't reach its heights if he had no backing from the Iksa Family. If he really can't solve our problem, then it's better to fight it out with the Iksa Family. We're not afraid of them anyway, if we really put our resources into it, how could they stop us?"

Laura smiled and said, "Maybe we can also use this matter to make contact with the Iksa Family. This would make it better for us later."

Zhao Hai smiled, "That would be good. Let's wait first and see how Bell handles it." As he said that, the sound of hooves could be heard outside. Zhao Hai waved his hand and the monitor appeared in front of him. The screen showed a group of cavalrymen heading towards them and surrounding the hotel.

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "He's really a spoiled young master. He even brought an army, it seems that I'm still far behind compared

to the real one.” Laura and the others laughed, they weren’t frightened whatsoever.

What’s surprising was that the hotel’s response was beyond Zhao Hai’s expectations. The hotel Zhao Hai and the others were staying in was the Shelley Hotel. All medium and large cities in the continent had branches of Shelley Hotels in them. Since their service quality was top-notch, Zhao Hai decided to stay here as soon as he arrived at Sarte. What Zhao Hai knew for sure was that this hotel didn’t have any relation to Bell nor the Iksa Family.

Ordinary hotels, when they become surrounded by cavalry, would naturally be cowering in fear. Shelley Hotel, on the other hand, did the opposite, which Zhao Hai didn’t expect. They didn’t come up and capture the person responsible, but instead just opened their doors like normal, the attendants acted as though they didn’t see the cavalry outside. Only the person in charge of the whole hotel came and acknowledged the presence of the cavalry.

There was a carriage containing Fernand next to the cavalry. The long and slender manager with an astute face came forward. Zhao Hai had seen him before, he was always smiling when he spoke, but now he wore a calm face as he approached Fernand’s carriage, “This one has seen the Eldest Young Master, what did young master come here to do?

Fernand looked at the manager and angrily said, “Illin, you are wasting your breath, no need for more words. I’m here for Wales. It’s best if you get out of the way. Otherwise, you can’t blame me for my next action.”

Illin just looked at Fernand calmly. Fernand had the feeling that he was stared at by a serpent. This made him very uncomfortable.

Illin looked at Fernand and said calmly, “Eldest Young Master, since the day we started opening our business, we made sure to never chase our guests away. I don’t know what the young

master's grievance with Mister Wales is, but as long as Mister Wales stays within the premises of the hotel, he will be our guest. We're not the kind of hotel that couldn't guarantee a guest's safety. I suggest the young master to go back, if the young master wishes to cause trouble for Mister Wales, then he'd have to wait until Mister Wales leaves the hotel. When that time happens, no matter what young master plans to do, our Shelley hotel certainly wouldn't interfere, but that time isn't now."

When these words were heard by Zhao Hai, he couldn't help but applaud. He didn't think that inside the Iksa Domain, the hotel would actually dare to publicly cross horns with Fernand.

Chapter 328 – Power and Prestige

Fernand didn't expect that Illin would disregard his face, his expression changed and he said, "Illin, you're just a servant, what gave you the balls to oppose me? Are tired of living? Get out of the way or else I'll wreck your entire hotel."

Illin's eyes flashed a cold light, he replied, "Since our Shelley Hotel opened our shops in the entire continent, there wasn't anyone who dared to say that they would wreck our place. If the young master really plans to demolish our hotel, then I, Illin, wouldn't stop you. But you'll have to know that the Marquis would have to provide substantial reasons when this matter reaches the ears of the family."

Fernand calmed down, Although he was a spoiled young master, he wasn't dumb. His father told him about certain groups inside the domain he couldn't offend. The Shelley Hotel was one of them.

His earlier words were only caused by his momentary rage. Now that Fernand heard Illin's words, he calmed down. What Illin said wasn't a lie, there were numerous Shelley Hotels spread out in the continent, being able to handle such a huge business, how could the Shelley Family's influence be small? Not to say about Iksa Family, even the Aksu Empire's Imperial Clan would still have to think twice before offending Shelley Hotel.

Thinking about this, Fernand couldn't do anything other than suppressing the rage in his heart. Then he said, "If don't want me to cause trouble, just go call Wales out. We'll settle our own dispute."

Illin shook his head and said, "The young master has to forgive me, we need to follow the rules of the hotel. Unless the guest informs us beforehand, we cannot just disturb their rest."

The anger that Fernand suppressed erupted, he shouted, "Illin! I have already given your Shelley Family enough face and didn't

care about your rudeness. But now you're being completely unreasonable! Men, charge!"

Just as the cavalry was about to rush in, ten stone golems appeared, blocking the hotel's entrance like a wall. Afterwards, Zhao Hai's words could be heard, "Young Master Fernand, if you want to see me, just wait for me to come out. Why are you too impatient?"

After saying that, Zhao Hai walked out of the hotel. He first performed a salute to Illin and said, "I thank Mr. Illin's protection, I will never forget this favor until I die."

Illin showed a faint smile, then he said, "As long as mister continues being a customer at our hotel, then we'll always guarantee your safety."

Zhao Hai smiled, then didn't say anything more. He remembered Illin's gesture in his heart. At this time, Zhao Hai turned to Ferdinand whose face was red with anger, "Young Master Fernand, aren't you being too serious about our conflict? You hit my servant, I hit your servant, we're now even. I don't know why young master dragged these people here, what are you planning to do?"

Fernand sneered, "What? You want to admit defeat now? Too late, you knew this was our domain and yet still dare to offend me. You're courting death!"

Zhao Hai looked at Fernand and faintly smiled, "Does the young master really think that I'm afraid of you? To tell you the truth, I don't want to make this conflict bigger than it already is in consideration of the Marquis. Somebody wouldn't have a happy end if this continues, I hope the young master thinks twice."

Fernand sneered, "Saying these words is already too late, men, capture him!" The cavalry resumed their charge.

At this time, a voice was heard, "Stop! Quickly stop!"

When Zhao Hai heard the voice, he couldn't help but smile. This was Bell's voice, he finally came. If he was late, then Zhao Hai feared that he may actually have to make a move."

Fernand turned to look at Bell. He couldn't help but frown, he wasn't willing to annoy this man. Bell was the largest merchant in the domain as well as a very close friend of his father. Although he looked down on merchants, he still needed to give Bell face.

Seeing that Bell had suddenly arrived, Fernand frowned a bit. With Bell present, the situation became more complex.

At this time, he also remembered Ruyen's words. Ruyen told him that Zhao Hai came to Iksa Domain to meet with Bell to discuss some partnership. Now, it seems that the partnership has gone through.

Bell was very anxious, he didn't ride his carriage this time but rode a horse instead. Shue was right behind, also riding a horse.

Bell quickly arrived at the hotel, he looked at Zhao Hai and nodded. Then he turned to Fernand and said, "Eldest Young Master, how did my friend offend you? Please consider this little one's face and quell your anger."

Bell was a merchant, so when he apologized, he put on a smile, with this, people would generally be too embarrassed to get angry.

Fernand looked at Bell and listened to what he said. Fernand didn't want to be in conflict with Bell, he knew that he couldn't offend him. At this time, Ruyen came out of the hotel, and looked at Fernand.

When Fernand saw Ruyen appear, he became delighted. Ruyen looked at him with despise, then turned her head to Zhao Hai and made a face of admiration. Fernand anger flared up again, he looked at Bell and sneered, "Bell, you're just a merchant, why would I give you face? You became an honored guest at our house, became father's friend, and had me call you uncle, and now you

think that you're someone great? Get out of the way, or else I'll have to capture you along with Wales."

When Bell heard Fernand, his complexion paled. He clearly saw Fernand's rage reduce, but suddenly it came back. Bell knew Fernand, so he turned around and see the reason for his change.

He turned his head and saw Ruyen. Looking at Ruyen's appearance as well as her looks, Bell immediately knew that she was Purcell Duchy's young lady who was travelling with Zhao Hai. He also understood the current situation.

Bell took a deep breath, then turned to Fernand. He couldn't help but sigh inside, Robert was a perceptive person, so how could he sire a son be as idiotic as Fernand. Such clear motives but still couldn't see through it, he was too stupid.

Bell didn't know what to do. If the eldest young master really made this mistake, Bell wouldn't have anything to say. No matter what, this man was the Iksa Family's successor.

Then a voice came, "Such power and prestige, why don't you also capture me then." The voice wasn't loud, it was just ordinary, you almost couldn't hear it. But when Fernand heard this voice, his expression changed.

Bell and Illin became relieved upon hearing this voice, Zhao Hai also turned to look at the source. There was a carriage that had just arrived. The carriage was large and majestic, but a kind of majesty that was low-key, a humble type of majesty.

A middle aged man stood in front the carriage. Although he was a noble's robe, he wore clear glasses. His noble's robe looked very refined, and paired with his eyeglasses, it gave him a scholarly aura.

Seeing the man, Zhao Hai couldn't help but feel a favorable impression towards him. Back on Earth, Zhao Hai was an author, so his body naturally would express a scholarly tone. This made

Zhao Hai form a connection with the man, giving Zhao Hai a good impression of him.

The man was naturally Robert. Although Robert had a calm face, everyone who knew him understood that he was angry. Seeing Robert arrive, Bell greeted him, “Marquis Robert unexpectedly came. How dare we make the Marquis work hard. Wales, quickly greet the Marquis.”

Zhao Hai hastily bowed and said, “Wales had seen Marquis Robert.”

Robert nodded as he looked at Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai was dressed like a dandy, but when Robert looked a bit more, he felt something was not right. Although Zhao Hai wore clothes that might make him flamboyant, and also wore pink eyeglasses, something that he didn’t understand, Robert was very sure that him and Zhao Hai were the same. Robert also noticed Zhao Hai’s aura.

Because of his occupation as a novel writer back on Earth, as well as his fondness for ancient literature, and also the relative calmness of Earth’s society compared to Ark Continent’s, Zhao Hai’s aura exhibited a calm and tempered attribute, a strange temperament that didn’t belong in the Ark Continent.

Robert was a perceptive man, when he saw Zhao Hai’s temperament as well as how he was dressed, he immediately understood. He couldn’t help but smile, but he didn’t reveal it, he nodded to Zhao Hai and said, “Young man, very good, hehe, what a pity that you have such temper.”

Hearing this, Zhao Hai knew that he was found out. His face couldn’t help but redden, he really was quite impulsive, he replied, “Marquis was right, I had been impulsive.”

Robert chuckled, then he turned to Fernand. Now, Fernand’s face was pale ever since Robert arrived. Fernand knew that he was in deep trouble, but he didn’t dare to run away. Robert didn’t teach him that power and influence came with time. Robert was

very lenient with him, making Fernand act unreasonably in their Domain.

Chapter 329 – How did I get a stupid son?

Robert just glanced at Fernand without saying anything. He turned to the cavalrymen and asked, “Who is in command today?”

A man in a horse went to Robert and bowed, “Third Battalion Commander Nicholas has seen Marquis Robert.” It was a rule that only in the presence of the Emperor would cavalry men dismount when giving a salute, therefore even though the cavalry were Robert’s subordinates, they didn’t dismount when giving him a salute.

Robert looked at Nicholas and nodded, “Head back and receive 50 canes, go on.” Nicholas immediately bowed and said, “Yes”. Then he waved and led the cavalry away.

Nicholas knew why he was punished. He was part of the Sarte city’s defense force, so even though they were subordinates of the Iksa Family, they couldn’t just be ordered around. It would need Robert’s command token to make them move. But this time, because of Fernand’s words, they went out, this was enough justification for Robert to punish them.

Looking at Nicholas’ cavalry leaving, Robert turned his head to Fernand and said, “Go home. Mister Wales and Bell will go to the mansion with me.”

Then Robert turned to Illin and apologized, “Manager Illin, the young one had been impolite. Please don’t take it to heart, one of these days I’ll come visit and formally apologize.”

Illin smiled faintly, “Sir Marquis is too polite. This one wouldn’t dare make the Marquis apologize. Marquis had already taken good care of the hotel.”

Robert laughed and said, “Mister Illin is also very polite, pulling the business’ merit to my head. Hahaha, good, I’ll certainly find time to come. But not today.”

Illin quickly said, “Sir Marquis can come anytime.” Robert nodded, then he gave a signal to the carriage as he drove off.

Zhao Hai hastily went to Bell and rode his other horse. Then the both of them followed the Marquis towards his mansion. Fernand was also inside his carriage heading back to his home.

At the mansion, Robert invited Zhao Hai and Bell to the living room while Fernand followed them. When they entered the living room, the maidservants immediately prepared tea, then were driven out by Robert.

After the maidservants left, Robert’s face immediately changed. He slapped the table and looked at Fernand, “You fool! How did I manage to get such a stupid son. You know what kind of place Shelley Hotel is? Even when I eat there, I still need to pay full. But now you just lead some people and want to barge in? Do you want to die?”

Fernand lowered his head and didn’t dare to make any noise. Robert looked at Fernand and continued, “Just because our family had such a large domain doesn’t mean that we’re someone great. The reason we managed to get this territory was because the other Great Noble families didn’t take a liking to it. And now you regard yourself as someone powerful? If you add up all of the branches of the Shelley Hotel chain, they would reach up to ten thousand. They’re considered as one of the most powerful families in the continent. And you dared provoke them? Do you want to take the entire Iksa family down with you?”

Fernand was still quiet, still lowering his head, but deep in his heart he was not convinced. In his opinion, Robert was exaggerating. He didn’t believe that a hotel could have such power.

Looking at Fernand, Robert knew that his words didn’t reach his son’s heart. Robert couldn’t help but sigh, “Also, can’t you see that Ruyen was deliberately instigating the conflict? You became too blinded and became stupid. Me, Robert, had been smart my entire

life, how did I manage to sire a stupid son? Aside from women, don't you have anything else inside your head? Also, I wouldn't even have any problems if you were playing around with a good woman, but Ruyen is different. Didn't you know that she was quite infamous inside Purcell Duchy? It even made Evan decide to send her away to study in Rosen Empire. For such a woman, you are willing to drag a lot of people in trouble?"

It wouldn't be proper for Zhao Hai to open his mouth at this time. Since Bell was in close terms with Robert, he quickly said, "Sir Marquis, you really cannot blame this matter to the young master but instead to princess Ruyen. It's too easy for her to pretend and fool men. If I were to meet the young lady when I was younger, I also wouldn't be able to stop myself."

Robert stared at him and said, "Can't stop? Then how can Wales stop himself? I can see it, Wales didn't have any reaction towards the young lady. Wales, what's this about? Care to explain why you don't harbor any favor towards her?"

It wasn't a mystery why Robert was puzzled. He sees that Zhao Hai was given the Viscount title by Evan. So naturally it would be correct if Zhao Hai were to be more attentive to Ruyen. But why did Zhao Hai dislike her instead?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, then he prepared a response, "Young lady Ruyen is beautiful, but her reputation in the Purcell Duchy isn't likeable, I won't dare marry her. The title was willingly given by Duke Evan, I didn't want it. He just saw my capabilities and decided to give me this title."

Robert chuckled and said, "It looks like I didn't misread you. Your current appearance is just a disguise, no? What's the matter?"

Hearing this, Zhao Hai showed a faint smile, "Nothing, isn't it just nice to wear this attire? It even excuses me if I do something outrageous, hehe, it's extremely convenient."

Robert laughed, then he turned to Fernand, “It seem like I also need to prepare you for studying at Rosen Empire.”

When Fernand heard Robert, he immediately begged Robert, “Father, I’ll promise to be obedient from now on. Please don’t send me to Rosen Empire, it’s too far, I don’t want to go there.”

Looking at his son’s appearance, Robert helplessly smiled and said, “Forget it, you go back first. Don’t’ forget to come back in a while and accompany Wales and Bell for dinner.”

Fernand looked at Bell and Zhao Hai then nodded and went away. Looking at Fernand’s unwilling face, Robert couldn’t help but sigh and said, “His mother had spoiled him too much. He’s already a big man, but still acting like a child.”

Bell smiled and changed the topic, “Yesterday, I didn’t manage to visit you and tell this. This is the league’s new member Zhao Hai, you should have heard of him.”

Both Robert and Zhao Hai were surprised at Bell’s words. Bell’s message told both Robert and Zhao Hai that they were on the same side.

Zhao Hai and Robert stared at each other then back at Bell. At this point, Bell was chuckling. Robert couldn’t help but smile, “So it’s true that the two of you were in a partnership. I didn’t know that you had another secret.”

Zhao Hai also couldn’t help but smile, he didn’t expect that the Iksa family’s patriarch would be a member of the League of Dark Mages.

However, he changed his thoughts and saw that something was not right. He heard the Robert was a 7th rank Wind element Mage. How could he be a member of the league?

Looking at Zhao Hai expression, Bell smiled and said, “Don’t assume that the League of Dark Mages’ members are all Dark element Mages. There are also quite a few number of people of

different backgrounds that are members of the league, like me and Robert. We became too tired of the Radiant Church's antics. Seeing that we had a common hatred with the league, we decided to join."

Zhao Hai nodded. Robert looked curiously at Zhao Hai and said, "You're also in the league? Are you a Dark Mage?"

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "When I joined the league back then, I was a Dark Mage. But a fire, earth and wind tri-element mage's status is much more convenient in the continent at this time."

Robert and Bell both stared at Zhao Hai. Looking at the two people, he smiled and added, "Don't stare at me like that, I don't actually know magic. I have a Divergent ability, it can imitate magic spells. Presently, I could imitate earth, wind, fire, dark, and light element mages. This is how I can pretend to be a three element mage."

Zhao Hai's words further surprised Robert and Bell. But Zhao Hai couldn't blame them, Divergent abilities were very rare and mysterious. Therefore, when they heard that Zhao Hai had a Divergent ability, they were very surprised.

On the other hand, the reason why nobody was surprised about Shue is because he was already quite well known early on his life. Everyone knew his ability and were not surprised. But now that Zhao Hai also said that he had such ability, Bell and Robert almost didn't believe him.

Zhao Hai looked at the two and smiled bitterly. Then he didn't talk anymore, he knew that the more he talked the more mistakes he would make, so he decided to settle for less.

Bell and Robert saw that Zhao Hai didn't want to divulge more information so they didn't push him further. The league was quite a loose organization and everyone had their secrets, so they didn't inquire anymore.

Robert shifted the topic, "Right, Zhao Hai, what did you see Bell

for? This fellow is a sleazy businessman. Why would you want to do business with him?”

It was obvious that Robert and Bell’s relationship was quite good, seeing how they tease each other. Zhao Hai quite admired these types of friendships.

Bell looked at Robert, “What? You’re asking why Zhao Hai went to me for business? Did you forget what he did in the past?”

Robert froze, he remembered the Haven brand products in the Purcell Duchy some time ago. These products were all provided by Zhao Hai. Thinking about it, it wasn’t surprising for Bell and Zhao Hai to team up.

Robert nodded then he turned to Zhao Hai, “So what business are you doing with Bell? Haven products?”

Zhao Hai shook his head and said, “Not this time. I want to sell Milk wine at them moment. I’ll give them to Bell and he’ll be the exclusive seller for Aksu Empire.”

Robert said, “Milk wine? Why sell that? Would people buy it?”

Bell smiled and said, “I’ll make you try it later, and I promise you, you wouldn’t want to drink any other liquor after then.”

Looking at Bell’s expression, Robert knew that the wine would surely be good. But he was also curious, his family’s domain was bordered with the prairie, and also had some businesses with the beastmen. So naturally. he didn’t drink a small amount of milk wine, but he still couldn’t get used to it.

Chapter 330 – Illin

The group chatted in the living room unwary of the time that had passed. The topics they talked were mostly about the League of Dark Mages. Zhao Hai was a new recruit and he didn't know a lot about the league, so he used this opportunity to discuss with the other two.

The two didn't hide anything from him either. As it turns out, Robert was able to join the league thanks to Bell. The two's relationship was already good before Robert joined the league, and when one time Bell asked Robert about what he thought about Dark Mages, Robert was unexpectedly fine with them. In contrast, Robert was disgusted with the Radiant Church and its overbearing attitude. Finally, after multiple contacts, Bell finally invited Robert to the league.

Upon listening to Robert's words, Zhao Hai felt a bit anxious. From their discussions, it seems that they were already integrating Zhao Hai with the league, it was quite amusing.

But from the way things was, he had no other alternative than just make them believe that he was already a firm believer. The two also told him a lot about the league, giving Zhao Hai more understanding of the group.

When dinner time came, the group headed to the dining hall. Fernand also came to drink wine with them. At this time, Fernand's mind was already clear. He was very embarrassed, he was not stupid, when he calmed his mind down, he realized that Ruyen was just pushing him towards trouble earlier this morning.

Although he was manipulated, his heart didn't have any misgivings, making him suffer a loss, this made him feel very awkward. When dinner came, Robert sent someone to fetch him, so he went.

After the group sat down, Robert took out the fruit wine he

prepared. But Bell quickly stopped him, he said, “Keep this wine, today, Wales will provide the liquor. Wales, you will right?”

Because Fernand was present, Robert didn’t want Fernand to know Zhao Hai’s true identity, so they decided to call him Wales. This didn’t mean that Robert didn’t want Fernand to get to know Zhao Hai. Knowing Zhao Hai was actually good for his son.

Zhao Hai’s identity couldn’t be revealed inside Aksu Empire, the less people who knew, the better. Although Fernand wasn’t that stupid, he was quite impulsive from time to time. When Zhao Hai’s status gets revealed, Evan, Bell, and Robert would be implicated. So Robert decided to make Fernand be in the dark regarding Zhao Hai’s status.

Robert looked curiously at Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai smiled and said, “Right, let’s have my wine. It could also be considered as my apology to brother Fernand.” A liquor bag appeared as he waved his hand.

Seeing this, Fernand didn’t dare to underestimate Zhao Hai anymore. From Zhao Hai’s action, it was obvious that he had a spatial storage item, the Iksa Family didn’t even have one, it was that rare. Such item was a symbol of status, now Fernand didn’t have any doubt about Zhao Hai’s background.

Zhao Hai didn’t care about Fernand’s expression. He poured himself a cup and also three more for the others. Then he lifted a glass and held it to Fernand and said, “Brother Fernand, I had been impulsive today and had offended brother. Please take this cup as a sign of my apology.”

Fernand became embarrassed when he heard Zhao Hai, he quickly lifted his glass and said, “Brother is too kind, today’s matter was my fault. It should be me who has to offer a glass.” Then the two clinked their glasses and drank the wine.

Zhao Hai was used to the wine, so he didn’t have any reaction. Fernand, on the other hand, had never drank such strong liquor.

After he downed his glass, he choked repeatedly with his face red.

Zhao Hai smiled and poured himself another glass. He turned to Robert and said, “Sir Marquis, today’s matter was my fault. I even troubled you, please have this glass.”

Robert looked at Fernand’s reaction and was surprised. He knew that Fernand was a good drinker. Even though Fernand was a no good son, when it came to liquor and women, he was better than Robert. For even Fernand to be like that after a glass, would he be able to take it?

Bell looked at Robert’s expression, he smiled and said, “It’s alright, the liquor is very fragrant, but it’s also very strong. It is good to be careful and not drink it like it is Fruit Wine. When you drink it, take it sip by sip, then you’ll know that it is a rare delicacy.”

Robert looked at Bell as though he didn’t believe him, Bell just returned his gaze. He looked at the glass and gently took a small sip, then his face changed into delight.

Robert looked at the glass, and took another sip. He savored the wine’s flavor, Robert couldn’t help but get quiet and appreciate the wine. After some time, he opened his mouth and said, “Good wine, nice flavor.”

Fernand also finished his glass at this time. Zhao Hai gave him another cup and said, “Brother Fernand, how was it? Was the wine good?”

Fernand didn’t react, he looked at the clear wine in the glass and nodded repeatedly, “Good, it is really good. Comparing this to the other liquors I’ve drank before, it seems like I had been drinking water all along, this liquor is very good.” Then he lifted his glass and took another sip.

Robert also continued to drink the liquor as the group ate the dishes on the table. It was said that the best way to make friends is

through liquor. Before long, the group's relationships became better. Zhao Hai and Fernand now looked like intimate brothers.

The meal was very jolly, Fernand still didn't want to go and study, so Robert berated him, but looking at Fernand's expression, it seemed like he didn't take his father's words seriously.

After having eaten their meal, Zhao Hai returned to the hotel. This time, he didn't bring Laura and the others, so he wanted to tell them what just happened.

When he entered the hotel, Illin welcomed him. Zhao Hai quickly gave a salute and said, "Manager Illin, hello."

Illin smiled and said, "Mister Wales had been well. Mister Wales, I have something to discuss with you, can I borrow some of your time?"

Zhao Hai stared for a moment, but his impression of Illin was good so he said, "Alright, Mister Illin." Illin quickly reached his hand and said, "Please" Then the two went towards an office room in the first floor.

Illin's room was very stylish. Aside from the living room, there was also a bedroom inside, but the door was closed so Zhao Hai couldn't see in.

After Zhao Hai was invited to sit down, Illin began by serving Zhao Hai a cup of tea, then he proceeded, "Did mister experience some troubles when visiting the Marquis' mansion? If you have any troubles, you can come see me. There are only quite a few things that the hotel can't do in the city."

Zhao Hai gave a faint smile and said, "I thank the manager for his concern. But the Marquis had been very good to me while I was in his mansion." Although he expressed his thanks, Zhao Hao became vigilant. Illin looked too eager to get his favor, it wasn't an attitude you just show to a guest. Illin was being too suspicious.

Illin nodded and said, "That's good. This time, I had invited

mister to ask about something. Last time, you drank some wine back at Casa City's Shelley hotel. I heard that the wine was very fragrant. Can I know where Mister got that wine from? Is it really from the prairie?"

When Zhao Hai heard him say so, he immediately understood the matter. Since the Milk wine was to be distributed anyway, he didn't hide it, "Although the wine was made using the regular milk wine method, I made some improvements to it, making its flavor better. Why did you ask?"

Illin smiled and said, "Mister doesn't need to be anxious, our Shelley family's intentions are good. It's like this, we want to buy a lot of wine from mister and sell it on our stores. I just don't know whether that would be possible?"

Zhao Hai stared for a moment then said, "It's possible, but I already had an agreement with Bell to have him be the sole supplier inside Aksu Empire. If I also supply you, it wouldn't be good. Also, the wine's output isn't high, to tell you the truth, each wine needed a lot of raw ingredients to make. So we cannot produce it large scale."

Illin nodded, he's also a businessman, so he knew about Zhao Hai's difficulty. He looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Mister, how about this, the liquor you supply will only be served on our hotels. If a guest wanted to acquire some for himself, then mister Bell would handle it. Right, except for Mister Bell's supply, how much could you provide our hotel each month? And for how much?"

Zhao Hai thought for a moment and said, "Since the manager has decided on it, how about this, I'll provide your hotel 10,000 jin of wine each month. If the productions increases later, then we'll act accordingly, what do you think?"

Illin's eyes lit up, "10,000 jin, although it isn't a lot, it would be sufficient in the meantime. I hope that you could increase your production as soon as possible. Right, since the supply had been

settled, for how much would you sell them?”

Zhao Hai smiled, “Two gold coins per jin. This is also my selling price for Bell. What does manager Illin think of this?”

Illin nodded, “Price isn’t high, good, then we’re settled. Can I know when mister can deliver? When does mister want to be paid?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, “In a few days, I’ll have Bell contact you. The money will be given to Bell and he’ll pass it to me. Can you work with this?”

Illin nodded, “Alright, I’ll do what mister said. Does mister need a written agreement?”

Zhao Hai smiled, then he replied, “No need, I believe that for the Shelley Family to handle such large business, they should be very honest in their deals. I don’t have any problems here, manager could just wait for the wine to arrive and inspect them then. If manager can find faults in the product, you can just return them to me. What do you think?”

Illin nodded and said, “Right, let’s go with that. Then, I won’t disturb mister’s rest anymore.” Zhao Hai stood up and was lead by Illin out as he headed to his room.

Chapter 331 – They're as close as brothers?

Laura and the others already had their meals when Zhao Hai returned, currently they were in the living room talking with each other. When Zhao Hai came in, they immediately stood up and looked at him. Seeing their reactions, Zhao Hai said, "What are you looking at? Did something happen?"

Laura smiled and said, "Happen? Looking at what you just did, didn't Marquis Robert give you problems?"

Zhao Hai smiled, "It's fine, we drank liquor and became good friends, so how could he give me trouble? Right, what about you? Did you already have dinner?"

Laura replied, "We've already eaten, but what did Robert talk with you?" Zhao Hai smiled and told them about what happened at Robert's mansion. When Zhao Hai said that Robert was someone from the League of Dark Mages, the group became surprised. They didn't expect Robert to be someone from the league, it seems like the league's influence isn't small. No wonder they dared oppose the Radiant Church.

Zhao Hai continued, he also talked about his and Illin's milk wine agreement. Laura nodded and said, "Good, I'm also worrying about this aspect. Currently, we had two businesses, one from the Purcell Duchy and the other is in the Beastman Prairie. Our milk wine is a new venture, we produce about 1000 jin per day and Bell certainly wouldn't be able to handle all of it. It's also not good to have a single channel for this product. With our agreement with Illin, we obtained another outlet."

Zhao Hai and smiled, "Moreover, another important point is that we had drawn a connection with the Shelley Family. You didn't see Robert's expression when he mentioned the Shelley Family, his reaction clearly showed the power of the family. If we can get a relationship going with them, it will be give us an advantage in the

future.”

Laura agreed, “That would be good, but highly unlikely. The Shelley family is a huge merchant family. They wouldn’t just make connections if they don’t get a huge benefit. If there are nothing in it for them, then they would not care about you at all.”

Zhao Hai smiled then replied, “This isn’t bad at all. If we are just ordinary, then Southern King wouldn’t deal with us. The League of Dark Mages wouldn’t help us at all. Not everything is a benefit anyway. This time’s cooperation with the Shelley Family isn’t a bad thing.”

Laura smiled, “In any case, we already made a deal with them, and we shouldn’t hurry our plans. I think that if we go back to the Black Wastelands, we can recall all the bulls and argali from the space. We could also farm some fire fish and try to make more deals with Shelley Hotel. If we manage to get their attention, they might help us. What do you think?”

Zhao Hai replied, “Good. Also, it looks like we need to stay for an additional day, I need to see Bell and discuss about Illin’s deal, then we can leave. Right, I plan to have Shue return to Casa City and tell Uncle Evan about Ruyen’s situation. I won’t dare accompany her anymore seeing how she already tried to harm me once, I don’t like to see her every day.”

Laura smiled, “That’s also good, but I think we should have Shun go. He’s small and light, I think we could try to make him ride a blood hawk and see if the hawk could carry him. If we succeed, then maybe we can have some aerial battalions in the future.”

Zhao Hai’s eyes lit up when he heard Laura’s words. Having an air force was his dream. Although the hawks were not that small, carrying humans was still quite troublesome for them. But Shun was different, Shun was light, Zhao Hai believed that if the hawk can manage to carry him, then they would be able to set a standard in the future.

Since it was still already late, Zhao Hai didn't drink again. The group chatted for a while and then rested. The next morning, Zhao Hai's group went to the dining hall to eat. When Ruyen came in, she looked at Zhao Hai and coldly snorted. Then she sat on another table and ordered dishes for herself.

Zhao Hai didn't care whether she joined or not. He and the others ate together instead. This was also the first time Laura and the group ate together in a dining hall since the start of their journey.

At this time, a horse's neigh could be heard outside. Then a person came in, Zhao Hai curiously looked at the person and saw that it was Fernand. Zhao Hai couldn't help but stare, what did he want this time? Last night, Zhao Hai remembered that Fernand had drank too much, why did he come so early in the morning?

Fernand swept through all the guests in the dining hall, he gave Ruyen a salute first, then ran up to Zhao Hai's table and said, "Brother, I see that you're eating, I didn't have my breakfast yet, so let me join you. Ah, I didn't bring any wine this morning, brother, come give me some of yours."

Looking at the alcoholic in front of him, Zhao Hai didn't know whether to laugh or cry, he said, "Brother Fernand, why are you here? So early in the morning and looking for liquor to drink, aren't you afraid that Uncle Robert will scold you?"

These two people chatting here gave every person inside the dining hall a shock. Most of them knew that the two were in conflict yesterday and Fernand even got the city's garrison involved, forcing Marquis Robert to act. The scene they were seeing today made them all speechless.

In just one night, the two became as close as brothers? Was the world changing too fast? Everyone looked at the two, puzzled and shocked.

Ruyen was more dumbfounded, she knew that Fernand almost

fought with Zhao Hai yesterday because of her instigations. How could Fernand disregard her today and instead ran up to Zhao Hai?”

Fernand didn't care about these people's reactions, he looked at Zhao Hai and said, “I'm always scolded daily, I'm already used to it. And aren't you gonna leave? So I might as well go out drink, quickly take it out.”

Zhao Hai said helplessly, “Don't worry, I won't be leaving today. Also, when I transport some wine, you can go to Bell and buy from him. I also made a partnership with the hotel to serve the wine here later on. You wouldn't need to fear about not drinking my wine.”

Hearing Zhao Hai's words made Fernand's eyes light up, “Really? Fantastic, I actually feared that I wouldn't be able to drink the liquor anymore. But I'm actually poor person, if you don't provide the wine, I'm afraid that I won't be able to afford it.”

Zhao Hai gave him a look, “Why are you telling me you're poor? I didn't ask you to lend me money. Really, the successor of the Marquis running to me and telling me he's poor.”

Fernand forced a smile, “Brother, you don't know my pain. Although I'm the Mansion's eldest young master, my monthly allowance isn't that great. If I manage to overspend, my father would come and pick me up. But I can't help it, if you were in my position, you will always want to spend as much as you want.”

Zhao Hai rolled his eyes, “You have it easy, compared to me who always travelled everywhere, or maybe do you want to change places?”

This time, it was Fernand who rolled his eyes, “Now you're telling me that I have it better. If I had such beautiful women to travel with, I would be willing to be on the road everyday.”

Zhao Hai was helpless against Fernand. Fernand wasn't a bad

fellow, he just had the problem all rich young masters have. But Fernand was also different, if he liked a woman, then he'd find ways to bring her back home, otherwise he wouldn't have that many wives and concubines. And if he wanted to go out and play, he could find some who are willing. Ruyen, however, was an exception, she was worse than the other women.

Moreover, Fernand's age was close to Zhao Hai's. And since he was spoiled by his mother from an early age, his attitude was just like Zhao Hai's friends back on earth. This made Zhao Hai chat with Fernand comfortably.

Looking at Fernand's appearance, Laura felt it funny. Fernand and Zhao Hai ate their meals, but in the end, Zhao Hai still didn't give Fernand any wine.

Watching them laughing and eating at their table, Ruyen's expression worsened. She didn't understand how this happened. Why did the playboy Fernand not come to her but instead went to Zhao Hai?

After breakfast, Zhao Hai set out towards the outskirts of the city. Although Fernand didn't know what Zhao Hai was doing, he also joined him outside.

Stopping the carriage and seeing that there was nobody around, Zhao Hai made howling sound as a Blood Hawk came down from the Space. The Blood Hawk was naturally released by Zhao Hai, but since Fernand was present, he pretended to howl to call the hawk over.

Fernand, who was with Zhao Hai, was very curious of this majestic hawk that fell from the sky. Zhao Hai didn't bother with him and called out to Shun.

Imagining Shun riding the hawk, Fernand could help but laugh. His short stature, compared to the eagle, was very disproportionate.

Then Zhao Hai turned to the hawk and said, “How is it? Can you carry Shun on your back?”

The Blood Hawk paused for a moment then nodded. Zhao Hai also nodded and then handed Shun a letter, he instructed, “Shun, take the Blood Hawk and go to Casa City. Give this letter to Grand Duke Evan. This is my badge, take it. After handing the letter to him, tell him that I would be waiting for his response.”

Shun was skeptical when Zhao Hai told him to ride the hawk. But when he saw the Blood Hawk’s appearance, his heart became nervous. Nevertheless, he nodded and carefully received the letter and crawled to the back of the bird. The hawk gave Zhao Hai a cry then flapped its wings and took off. Before long, the two became two black spots in the sky.

Chapter 332 – A Gift to You

Fernand was shocked as he looked at Zhao Hai, “They’re gone? Brother, did you raise that magic beast? How can it carry someone easily?”

Zhao Hai smiled, “It’s a phantasmal beast I raised, hehe. Also, don’t think of riding it, only Shun can do that with his light body. Being too heavy is not good.”

Fernand paled while he asked Zhao Hai, “Brother did you know how valuable that hawk is? Except for 9th ranks, there are only few people who could fly, aerial magic beasts are very difficult to subdue, and only 9th ranks are able to do so. Even though they were captured, their bodies would be too small, unable to carry a person. Although you said that only lightweight people can ride your Blood Hawk, how difficult would it be for Great Nobles to find some light warriors? If your Blood Hawk were to be reproduced, they can become an aerial battalion. Brother, you must not reveal this fact willingly, don’t blame me if you get into trouble because of it. Also, did you say that the hawk was a phantasmal beast? Is there really a phantasmal beast that big?”

When Zhao Hai heard Fernand warn him, he thought that Fernand wasn’t that bad. He also treated Zhao Hai as a true friend, otherwise he wouldn’t tell him about this matter. If it were to spread, Zhao Hai will have to change his appearance again.

However, after hearing the other part of Fernand’s statement, Zhao Hai couldn’t help but roll his eyes and said, “You think I’m lying to you? That is a genuine phantasmal beast. How about I give you one?”

Hearing Zhao Hai, Fernand’s eyes lit up, “Are you sure? That’s great, where is it? Call it quickly, right, the beast’s body is huge, I fear that my little body won’t be able to support its consumption.”

What Fernand said was reasonable, phantasmal beasts in the

continent needed energy to feed on. With the Blood Hawk's build, the amount of energy it needs to feed would certainly be huge, with Fernand's subpar mage talent, he's afraid that he'll be sucked dry.

Zhao Hai smiled and assured him, "It's alright to feed them meat. Don't tell me you can't even feed them meat? You'll make me look down on you."

Fernand was confused, he replied, "You mean that your phantasmal beasts can eat meat? Is it really a phantasmal beast?"

Zhao Hai gave him a blank look, "Do you want it or not? Remember, either you feed it or make it find food for itself."

Fernand's eyes were very bright, "Of course I want it. Why would I deny such great thing? When will you give it to me?"

Zhao Hai gave another howl, then a Blood Hawk came down, it looked like the one Shun was riding on. Zhao Hai turned to the hawk and said, "I'll gift you to Fernand, follow his orders from now on." The hawk nodded, then the hawk went to Fernand and with its sharp beak, rubbed Fernand lightly, expressing its affection.

Fernand did not become afraid of the hawk. Even though it seems to have sharp beaks capable of breaking through metal, it didn't emit any harmful intentions at this time. He excitedly touched and pet the hawk, the hawk didn't have any reactions.

However, Fernand said while looking at the Blood Hawk, "How would I bring this thing back? It couldn't ride inside the carriage, the horses would be too scared to move."

Zhao Hai chuckled and said, "No need to place it on a carriage, just let it follow you back to the mansion. But you need to prepare a suitable place for it to stay."

Fernand nodded, he looked at the Blood Hawk happily and said, "Go fly!". The Blood Hawk was very obedient, it immediately

flapped its wings and flew.

Fernand laughed and said, “Good! Fantastic! This hawk is very obedient. I must say brother Wales, why do you have such good things?”

Zhao Hai faintly smiled, “Well, isn’t it good to have nice things? Since you already had the hawk, let’s go back. I still need to see Bell and discuss the matter with the milk wine. Originally I only had him sell the wine, but Illin unexpectedly suggested to serve it on the hotel.”

Fernand smiled, “Look, how about you also do milk wine business with my Family? I can talk to father.”

Zhao Hai looked at him and said, “Don’t talk nonsense, if I supply you with milk wine you’ll end up drinking all of them. Forget it, let’s return.” Soon after, the carriage returned to Sarte City. Zhao Hai immediately headed for Spring Grass Residence.

At this time, not only did Fernand forget about yesterday’s matter, he also accompanied him like a friend. Also, his cheeky attitude made Zhao Hai admire him.

Zhao Hai met Bell and discussed about the new developments on the business. Bell didn’t object, the Shelley Hotel only intended to serve the wine to their customers. Guests drinking in the hotel wouldn’t put a dent on his business. He also knew that his capabilities still aren’t enough, it was natural for Zhao Hai to find another partner.

Moreover, Bell understood that there was no way to compare his capability with the Shelley Family. If Zhao Hai and him weren’t fellow members of the league, their partnership won’t probably even happen. Shelley Family, on the other hand, is famous throughout the whole continent. With their business, not to mention his 1,000 jin per month, they could even swallow more than 10,000 jin.

Supplying 10,000 jin to the hotel each month sounds a lot, but as Robert said, the Shelley Family has more than 10,000 hotels in the continent. Later on, if the wine were to be divided, each branch would have less than a jin of wine each, this quantity is sufficient enough.

It was because of this that Bell didn't become disappointed and agreed to Zhao Hai's request to supply the wine. In Bell's mind, if he helped Zhao Hai supply the liquor, he could make connections with manager Illin. With this relationship, even if Illin gave him a small business deal, it would be much better than trading in the prairie.

Zhao Hai was glad when he saw Bell agree. Then, Zhao Hai asked Bell to prepare some dishes to eat. Bell didn't decline, and ordered his servants to prepare a meal. Fernand also stayed and ate with them even though he didn't have any business with Bell. Fernand joined their talks and also laughed with them.

Bell understood human nature and also understood Fernand's temper. He had a child's temper since he was spoiled from his youth. And only Robert could scold him, no wonder he turned to be what he is today.

With Bell's constant contact with Fernand, he knew all about Fernand's quirks. So he didn't take yesterday's matter to heart. Fernand also seemed to forget about yesterday as he joked around with Bell, surprising Zhao Hai.

Regarding Fernand's disposition, Zhao Hai was helpless. After having lunch, Zhao Hai took the drunk Fernand back to the mansion.

After handing Fernand milk wine to give to Robert, he left and returned to his room at Shelley Hotel to take a good rest. At around 2 in the afternoon, Shun returned bringing with him a wax sealed letter and handed it over to Zhao Hai.

Inside was a letter written by Evan. Zhao Hai opened it and read

the contents inside. The letter didn't say anything else other than telling Zhao Hai the he didn't need to take care of Ruyen anymore. He also stated how disappointed he was at his daughter.

Zhao Hai also couldn't bear travelling with Ruyen anymore. If Ruyen keeps bringing him trouble, he wouldn't know what to do. If it were another person, he could just shout at them when he gets annoyed, but he couldn't do that to Ruyen. She was Evan's daughter, and Zhao Hai was indebted to the Grand Duke, to shout at his daughter was unjustifiable.

Zhao Hai just wouldn't care about her anymore. For the young lady, he could only ignore her. He also couldn't just wait it out, Zhao Hai saw that Ruyen intends to keep following him since she still hadn't left Sarte City. Her waiting made Zhao Hai sigh.

That evening they rested well. Early next morning, the group ate their breakfast and set out. As Zhao Hai expected, Ruyen followed his convoy closely, annoying Zhao Hai.

Without noticing, they arrived outside the city. When they exited the city, they saw two carriages waiting for them, one was Bell's and the other was Fernand's.

Seeing Zhao Hai's carriage, Bell and Fernand immediately went and gave Zhao Hai a greeting. When Zhao Hai walked out of his carriage, Bell smiled and handed him something, "Here, it's the letter of introduction for Sky Water City's lord, when you arrive there you can hand it to him."

Zhao Hai nodded his head and didn't say anything to Bell. There were a lot of people present, so it was inappropriate to discuss their secrets. In any case, the business with Bell had already been settled anyway.

Fernand looked at Zhao Hai and his eyes looked a bit red. He had lost friends in the past because of his identity, but Zhao Hai didn't care about who Fernand is. Although Fernand couldn't follow him, he was given a lot of things by Zhao Hai. He had the milk wine as

well as the hawk, Fernand was sad, it was hard to find such a friend.

Fernand patted Zhao Hai's shoulder and said, "Brother Wales, I'm not like you who could travel the world. My only great talent is appreciating the good things in the world, so if brother manages to find something good, you can keep it for me. Right, now that you're leaving, how about giving your brother some wine."

Zhao Hai slapped Fernand's hand and said, "We're already on the road, yet you still want to drink? If you keep being like this then we'll have to leave immediately."

Fernand seemed to not hear Zhao Hai, he smiled and took something from his carriage, "This is an emblem of our Iksa Family, take it, it makes you become someone from the Iksa Family. Yesterday I had father register your name to the Empire. Although it doesn't hold any title, it is still an emblem. Use it if the Purcell Family takes away your title."

Chapter 333-Send-off

Hearing Fernand warmed Zhao Hai's heart. Although Fernand was impulsive and extremely valued his face, when you become his friend he'll treat you like a true brother. When he saw that Zhao Hai wasn't with Ruyen, he was afraid that the Purcell Duchy would take Zhao Hai's title away, making Zhao Hai's travels inconvenient. So Fernand gave Zhao Hai his own carriage's emblem.

One must know that a Noble's emblem cannot just be used by anybody, only immediate family members could bring it. And all who used this emblem would have to be registered to the Empire.

Zhao Hai knew that it was impossible for Fernand to know his relationship with Evan, Fernand did this for Zhao Hai's good. But Zhao Hai cannot just casually use this emblem, since it may be involved in future troubles.

For example, if Zhao Hai used the emblem while encountering some problems, the matters would be recorded under the Iksa Family on the Empire's register.

This was different to the title bestowed by Evan. Even though Evan gave the title to Zhao Hai, it was Zhao Hai's own insignia that was presented, so his actions would be independent from the Purcell Family. Whether he was innocent or guilty of crime, the Empire wouldn't give the responsibility to Evan. This and using a family's emblem was quite not the same.

Zhao Hai carefully received the emblem, then he patted Fernand's shoulder and said, "You have to take care of yourself, brother. If there are any important matters, you can write a letter and send it through the blood hawk. He'll be able to find me and give the letter."

Fernand nodded and gave Zhao Hai a hard hug, Zhao Hai also returned the hug. After the two let go, Zhao Hai gave Bell a salute

and went to his carriage. He waved his hand to the two and departed.

Looking at Zhao Hai's carriage disappearing, Bell sighed and said, "He's an eagle of a man, possessing a heart as big as the sky."

Fernand smiled, "An eagle of a man indeed, he's a good friend. Right, Uncle Bell, come visit the mansion with me today, Wales left behind a few bottles of liquor for me, we can drink some cups."

Bell laughed and said, "Forget it, this old man couldn't keep up with you. You go back and drink slowly. I still have some accounting to do."

Fernand smiled and said, "You're very much like my father, I really can't deal with that kind of boring work. I'll be returning then, I still have some wine to drink." Then his carriage drove back to the city.

Bell looked at Fernand and smiled wryly, "Go live properly, you won't know how long you can keep being like that." Then he got on his carriage and drove away.

Zhao Hai was sitting in his carriage and stared at the emblem for a long time. After a while, he sighed, he really didn't have a good impression of Fernand the first time they met. But now it looked like he was a friend worth keeping.

Laura was also present when Zhao Hai and Fernand exchanged words, they didn't think that Ferdinand would show extreme care for them. Laura looked at the emblem and said, "You really can't expect that Fernand is also a good-hearted man."

Zhao Hai smiled and put away the emblem. Then he took out a map and spread it on the table. He pointed at the mark on the map and said, "This is the outpost that Bell told us about. I think we should send him wine as soon as possible."

Laura nodded and the group continued to look at the map. The map was very detailed, it showed how far the outpost was from the

Iksa Domain. It showed the tribe's name, its banner and the names of the people present there so they would never get the wrong one.

Zhao Hai turned to Laura and said, "What do you think we should do? I think we should have a Blood Hawk bring the Ghost Staff, and when it reaches the prairie, we'll release the carts to deliver the milk wine."

Laura nodded, "That is best. And to avoid unnecessary attention, we shouldn't have all of them be undead. Instead, we should have some drive the carts with Shue leading."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "Good, let's send Shue. In any case, they could just return to the Space and rest."

After the plan was made, Zhao Hai called Shue over and told him the situation. Shue didn't complain, although the prairie was cold, he wouldn't be there for long. And when he finished his business, they could just return instantly, so he naturally agreed.

Without Ruyen knowing, a hawk flew to the skies and headed to the prairie's direction. They were still fairly close to the prairie, so it only took two hours for the hawk to arrive.

Zhao Hai immediately released the carts, ten of them. Each cart carried milk wine, totalling to about 11,000 jin of wine. Then Shue went to the prairie through the space and led the carts and horses and headed to Bell's outpost.

Zhao Hai used Cai'er to its full advantage. Cai'er can be considered to be another ghost staff. With Cai'er, Zhao Hai could essentially send and receive to and from the Space at the same time.

The rest of the day was spent while quietly travelling. Soon, they spent the evening on a small town. There wasn't any trouble this time. Ruyen behaved and didn't bother Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai didn't comment on the matter. He had no complains if

Ruyen followed him honestly. Although Zhao Hai wanted to drive Ruyen away, thinking about Evan's letter, he couldn't act on it, the situation can only be like this.

The next three days were very calm. On the third day, Shue found the tribe with Bell's outpost. He also met the person that Bell told them and handed to wines over to him.

However, Shue wasn't able to get the payment, he still had to wait next month. But this was also in Bell and Zhao Hai's agreement. So after sending the supplies, Shue immediately returned. Although he disappeared for a couple of days, Ruyen didn't say anything. Nowadays, Ruyen and Zhao Hai didn't talk too much, everyone was just quietly hurrying along the peaceful road.

Half a month of restless travel later, the group finally arrived at the central area of the Aksu Empire, making Zhao Hai extra vigilant. They were hurrying along every single day, attracting as little attention as possible. Every time they pass a big city, they didn't stop, they only stopped when it became late.

Zhao Hai thought that Ruyen would want to stay at a hotel for two days, but he didn't think that she would endure and kept following Zhao Hai's convoy. This made Zhao Hai very uneasy.

This time, Zhao Hai didn't want to go to the capital of the Aksu Empire. It was the place where Zhao Hai used to stay, and there were too many people familiar with him. Although the Ghost Staff provided him with disguise, he still needed to be careful, so he avoided that place.

After another ten days of travelling, they finally arrived at the border between Aksu Empire and Rosen Empire, the Kolan Mountains!

The Kolan mountain range was the continent's biggest mountain range. It stretched for almost the entire span of the continent and was the natural border between the Aksu and Rosen Empires. This mountain range, like the Purcell Duchy and the Black Wastelands,

only had one canyon, which became the only main route between the two empires. They call this route, the Lifeline Canyon.”

However, different from the Black Wasteland’s situation, there were small routes inside the mountain range. These routes were used by merchants to smuggle some goods. There were plenty of carts and carriages going through these side routes every day to cross between Aksu and Rosen Empires.

Zhao Hai already had some understanding of this situation, but they didn’t plan on taking these side routes. They were going to pass through the main route to Rosen Empire.

With this, they could only pass through the Lifeline Canyon. Before the travel along the canyon, they still needed to pass through two fortresses on both ends of the road. One was Aksu Empire’s Cold Wind Fortress, the other one was Rosen Empire’s Hundred Battles Fortress.

In preparation for the travel, Zhao Hai’s group stayed inside Cold Wind Fortress. And since they’re going to travel on continuously for many days, they decided to rest well.

Cold Wind Fortress was big, its walls reached 200 feet in height and was a hundred percent made of stone. There were six gates along the north and south sides of the fortress, the widest of them was more than 20 meters wide and ten meters high. The smaller gates were 12 meters wide and eight meters high. The fortress gates were made of cast iron, making them very sturdy.

There were a hundred thousand guards present here all year round. The army belonged to the Aksu Empires famous Magic Beast Cavalry Army. All magic beasts used by the army were all captured from Kolan Mountain Range. There were numerous magic beasts present in the mountains, there were even rumors that 9th rank magic beasts were present, but there was no proof of it until now.

Because the mountain range had a lot of magic beasts, it also

made it impossible for large armies to pass through it. This contributed to the Kolan Mountains being the two empire's natural barrier.

Cold Wind Fortress was a heaven for adventurers and mercenaries who came to hunt for magic beasts. This also led to its chaos, making the fortress garrison to police the place and maintain public security. The garrison was also had two other purposes, to prevent invaders from the Rosen Empire and to collect tariffs.

Zhao Hai entered Cold Wind as low-key as possible. He didn't have any choice, Cold Wind Fortress was under Southern King's control, they were now inside enemy territory.

There was also a Shelley Hotel in Cold Wind Fortress. So naturally Zhao Hai chose to stay in the hotel. In such a place, his safety was backed by the Shelley Family. If you go to another hotel, it was possible that you'll get into a bandit's hotel instead.

After spending one night in the hotel, Zhao Hai didn't immediately take off. Instead, he went to some bookstores and bought a map of the Rosen empire as well as miscellaneous books about the empire.

Chapter 334 – Lifeline Canyon

It was not only Zhao Hai who hadn't gone to Rosen Empire, Laura and the others also hadn't gone there. So no person on their group had any understanding of the situation inside the empire.

The exception was Shue, he wandered around Rosen Empire for a period of time. When he arrived at Aksu Empire, he already had basic knowledge of the place.

Zhao Hai made Shue brief them about Rosen Empire's situation. Rosen Empire was the continent's most powerful nation, in Hundred Battles fortress, there would be 150,000 soldiers stationed every year, 50,000 of which were magic beast cavalry while the other 100,000 were normal soldiers. Their infantry were also deemed to be a first rate soldier all throughout the continent, even if they defend against a cavalry charge, they could still hold their ground securely.

Mages are prevalent inside Rosen Empire, so there would be mages positioned in the fortress all year round. And there would be Dark Mages among them. It was because unlike other nations, Dark element magic wasn't being suppressed in the empire.

Rosen Empire was worthy of being called the continent's most powerful nation. They were connected to the sea, of which their navy had gained their fair share of fame, to their north was the Aksu Empire, while they have the Lyon Empire to the south. And it's territory was seven times the size of Aksu Empire, one could imagine how enormous the empire was.

The Rosen Empire's territory was also gifted when it came to terrain. To their south was the Accra Mountain as well as the Magic Beast Domain, having a single route towards Lyon Empire. To their north was Kolan Mountain Range, with also a single road towards Aksu Empire. Such geographical advantage made it hard to invade the empire.

It was because of these advantages that the citizens of the empire developed their prideful personality. They think that since their nation was the best in the continent, the citizens of the other nations were inherently inferior. They even call the people from the Aksu Empire barbarians while those in the Lyon Empire were called southern barbarians.

From these names, one could see their attitude towards the citizens from the other empires. It can be said that the Rosen Empire citizens were born with an arrogant heart, looking down on people from other nations.

Therefore, for people like Zhao Hai who obtained their titles inside Aksu empire, respect wouldn't be something that they'll receive in the empire. Even commoners won't give them a salute.

After knowing these circumstances, Zhao Hai couldn't help but frown. He thought that his noble title would act as his self-defense, that he would be received with good intent. Now it seemed like that was false.

After a two-day rest inside Cold Wind Fortress, Zhao Hai's group finally embarked on their journey across Lifeline Canyon, heading towards Hundred Battles Fortress. They didn't encounter any big problems when they started out, but it was said that Lifeline Canyon would place among the top ten busiest roads in the continent. Although the fortress gate was very wide, the volume of people lining up to go in and out of the fortress was very long, there were a lot of people present.

Zhao Hai was well-mannered while lining up to leave the fortress. He also learned that the distance between Cold Wind Fortress and Hundred Battles fortress was about 300 li(150 km), although the Kolan mountain range was very long, Lifeline Canyon's width only amounted to a couple hundred li.

At this time, Zhao Hai saw many convoys along the way. On the carriages on these convoys were insignias of nobles, some were

even of famous Great Nobles. These convoys filled the entire scene, some even comprising of several hundred to a thousand carts and carriages, with guards reaching thousands. With each and everyone talking and shouting, the entire scene was very lively.

Comparing Zhao Hai's convoy to these huge ones would be like comparing a single drop to a huge ocean. Basically nobody paid any attention to them, much to Zhao Hai's delight.

It wasn't known whether Ruyen was afraid, but she became quite behaved these past few days. When she wasn't in her room, she would stay inside her carriage and didn't come out. This situation made Zhao Hai feel even better.

Despite being low-key, there were still some people who took notice of Zhao Hai's carriage, especially the giant-horned bull pulling it. After all, this magic beast was quite rare in the continent, it was unavoidable that it attracted a few pairs of eyes.

But as time passed by, nobody cared anymore, this was because in addition to the giant-horned bull, there was also another bull pulling Zhao Hai's other carriage. People thought that the giant-horned bull was just a variant of the other common bull.

Traversing 300 li would take a bull-pulled carriage more than a day's travel. So in the evening, the group had to camp inside Lifeline Canyon. And it was clear that the other travellers were very prepared as they built their tents and made a temporary camp.

Zhao Hai was also looking for a place for their camp. After their camp was constructed, Shue found Zhao Hai and said, "Young Master, we have to be careful tonight. In Lifeline Canyon, small convoys disappearing suddenly is a common occurrence. Here, no matter if you're from Aksu or Rosen Empire, bandits wouldn't care, thus the amount of robberies were also high. Moreover, magic beasts would also find opportunities to attack during dark.

Zhao Hai froze for a moment then nodded, "Good, we'll pay extra

attention. Also, go remind Ruyen about this as well to keep them on guard. Grand Duke Evan provided us with help. So we still need to keep Ruyen in mind.” Shue nodded, then turned away.

Laura looked at Shue’s back and sighed, “I must say, Ruyen is quite a pitiful. A single girl going to an unknown place to study. Also her status would be demoted from a young lady to a commoner, and may even get looked down. This wouldn’t make anyone feel better.”

Zhao Hai also sighed, but Ruyen’s situation was only brought upon by herself. She was intelligent, but she didn’t know where to use it, therefore she reached her current situation.

She thought that her father was incompetent, that he wouldn’t be able to provide her with a good life, so she gave her father sarcastic comments often, never giving him face. She thought that Adam wouldn’t live a good life, so she wanted to break their engagement. She thought that with her wit, all men would submit to her, therefore she acted as though she was an empress, ending up discrediting herself. Finally, Grand Duke Evan made her go far away to study, one could say that she brought this upon her own self.

People say that hateful people end up in pitiful situations. These words were fully reflected on Ruyen. She’s currently very pitiful, but she did do some hateful things.

Because they were camping outdoors, the other people were very vigilant of each other, so there wasn’t much contact between fellow travellers. In fact, this situation was present all along Lifeline Canyon. Except for those extremely large convoys, general convoys were alert, afraid of being attacked by others.

Like what Shue said, convoys regularly vanish in the canyon, so people were very wary of their surroundings.

After Zhao Hai and the group entered the tent, they immediately went to the Space. Tonight, it was Blockhead who was assigned to

watch the night while Rockhead drove the carriage outside. This was also Zhao Hai's plan, to have Blockhead and Rockhead switch places from time to time. Today. It was Rockhead's turn to drive the carriage while Blockhead stayed inside the Space.

This made it so that one of them could be assigned to be the night guard, making Zhao Hai relax. Shue also told Shun and Rockhead about the situation. So the three prepared their weapons and didn't take off their armor, so that they would be prepared to battle at any time.

In the middle of the night, Blockhead noticed some shadows closing in around their camps, but their goal didn't seem to be them, instead it seemed to be Ruyen.

Zhao Hai's camp was near Ruyen's, but they still had quite a distance between them. This made the other travellers inside the canyon confused whether they were travelling together or not.

Seeing the situation, Blockhead didn't know what to do. He wasn't sure if he should wake Zhao Hai up or not. In the end, he decided to wake Zhao Hai, he was afraid that those outsiders would also attack them.

Deciding on his action, Blockhead stood up and walked outside Zhao Hai's room. He knocked at the door and whispered, "Young Master, Young Master, something's happening."

Zhao Hai was a light sleeper, so when Blockhead knocked on his door, he immediately woke up. He wore his clothes and opened the door, "What's the matter?"

Blockhead lead Zhao Hai to the living room and pointed to the monitor. Zhao Hai looked at it and nodded, he turned to Blockhead and said, "Go wake Shun, Shue, as well as Rockhead. No matter what, Ruyen is with us. It isn't good for her to suffer an accident now. I wouldn't have any words to tell Uncle Evan if Ruyen gets into harm."

After that, the two went out from the Space. They didn't wake Laura and the others, they couldn't help them anyway. They would only worry if they woke up.

In order to keep them secure, Shue, Shun and Rockhead didn't go to the Space to rest but just slept outside.

Zhao Hai directly appeared on the three men's tent. When the two appeared, Shue and the other two woke up. The trio was surprised to see Zhao Hai, Shue whispered, "Young Master, did something happen?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "Some people encircled us, they're probably after Ruyen. Shun, go inform Ruyen, make them prepare."

Shun complied then vanished from the tent. Zhao Hai didn't notice how he left, the tent's curtain didn't even move.

Zhao Hai brought up the image projected on the monitor and the group looked at it seriously. The team that came seem to not belong to any convoy. It looked like they had come down from the mountains, they number about 700 people.

Looking at their appearance, it was possible that they were mercenaries. They wore leather armor with varying types of weapons that looked like they were used for a long time. Some weapons even seemed to be damaged but not even replaced.

Chapter 335 – Brilliant Method

Zhao Hai looked at the situation and relaxed, “Looks like these people were waiting in ambush since this morning, just waiting for some fat sheep. But do we really look like fat sheep?”

When Shue, Blockhead and Rockhead hear what Zhao Hai said, they couldn’t help but chuckle. Shue smiled and replied, “We’re not, but Ruyen does.”

The trio’s reaction made Zhao Hai ask, “Why? Everything seems to add up, we only have a few people, while Ruyen has a hundred guards. What’s wrong with that?”

Shue smiled faintly and said, “All travellers inside Lifeline know that only those with absolute confidence in their strength travel without guards. Our group only has two carriages and seem to have nobody acting as guards. Thus, for these mercenaries, only an idiot would not think that an expert was present inside one of the carriages. If these weak mercenaries provoke a hidden expert, they would only be courting death. Because of this, they didn’t target us. But Ruyen was the exact opposite, she had a hundred guards with her, along with several carriages. Moreover, the mercenaries could see that the strength of her guards are only on par with them, so they branded Ruyen’s group as fat sheep.”

Zhao Hai smiled and said to Shue, “I didn’t think that there’s such a thing, but it seems right. Not counting anybody else, you alone number more than the group outside, if they come attack us they would certainly be courting death.”

Shue smiled, to be honest, he was very satisfied with his capabilities. In the entire continent, the name Shue of a Thousand Shadows was very well-known.

At this time, the tent’s curtain moved slightly, then Shun’s form appeared inside. He told Zhao Hai, “Young Master, I’ve already informed Jill of the situation, they had prepared but they are not

optimistic.”

Zhao Hai thought for a moment and said, “Let’s go out, make sure to prevent your weapons from making any noise, we don’t want to alarm too many people.” Shun nodded and held the tent curtain up, Blockhead and Rockhead walked out first, then Zhao Hai, and finally Shue.

When the group went out of the tent, Zhao Hao waved his staff lightly and a one meter diameter Fireball appeared at the top of the staff. Zhao Hai made the Fireball rise in mid-air, making sure the vicinity of their camp was well lit.

The mercenaries didn’t expect Zhao Hai to immediately reveal his hand. While they were overwhelmed, Zhao Hai calmly said, “Dear friends, no need to hide, I want to speak to your representative.”

The mercenaries made a ruckus, then a fully bearded man came out of the crowd. He glanced at Zhao Hai and then the Fireball. The man had extraordinary vision, and he can see from the Fireball that Zhao Hai had the power of at least a 7th rank mage. And 7th rank Fire element mages were especially an absolute nightmare for small mercenaries.

The bearded man walked up and bowed to Zhao Hai, “This one didn’t know that mister is here. I ask mister to forgive us, we’ll immediately retreat and not disturb mister’s rest anymore.”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, “Good, very good. You and your people also didn’t have it easy by coming out at night. Shue, give them 1,000 gold coins to buy drinks with.

Although Shue didn’t understand what Zhao Hai was planning, he still turned around towards the tent and fetched a bag of coins. Inside the bag was exactly 1,000 gold coins. Shue took the bag and headed for the bearded man, then he placed the bag full of coins on the ground.

The bearded man examined Shue and finally wasn't able to stop himself from asking, "I'm not sure, but is mister Shue of a Thousand Shadows?"

Shue looked at the man and knit his brows. He doesn't seem to remember this person. He couldn't help but ask, "You know me?"

When the man heard Shue's confirmation, he couldn't help but reveal a panicked expression, "So it really was Mister Shue. Please forgive us Mister Shue. We really didn't mean to bother you this time."

Shue faintly smiled, "Forget it, this is a gift given by the Young Master. Go buy yourselves some drink. The young master's mood is good today and your responses have satisfied him, otherwise you people wouldn't be able to go back alive." Then he returned to Zhao Hai's side.

The bearded man didn't know if he should take the coin bag or not, the other people in his group were also helpless. Zhao Hai looked at the bearded man and said, "I have kindly given you this money, but you cannot just take it. I don't want to be bothered this evening anymore. I'll have to trouble you to be my night guards. Are you willing?"

The bearded man froze, then he immediately said, "Of course, of course we're willing. Mister can rest assured, we guarantee that even a mosquito wouldn't be able to enter mister's tent."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Good." Then he returned to his tent in silence.

Zhao Hai's move attracted the admiration of the other people in Lifeline Canyon. His move was too brilliant. First, he used his strength to shake the minds of the bandits then not only did he bribe them with money, he also hired them to be his night guards. This was a very clever method.

All the merchants who travel here knew that you shouldn't

offend thieves and bandits inside Lifeline Canyon. Even if you are strong, it's also best not to offend them. Even if they weren't capable of fighting strong people, they had a lot of crooked ways to annoy you.

They can harass you at night, and even if you managed to defend, they could still make you suffer some losses. They could also find a way to direct magic beasts down the mountain to attack you. Without even using a single person, they could still make you suffer. One could say that these bandits were like insects, unless you exterminate them in one fell swoop, they would annoy and attack you constantly until you feel very uncomfortable.

There was also another reason why these merchants didn't dare offend the bandits inside Lifeline Canyon. These bandits were linked to some people inside Cold Wind Fortress and Hundred Battles Fortress, if you push them back too much, the garrison troops of the two fortresses may even cause you a bit of trouble, causing you to suffer more losses. So the general travellers in the canyon didn't dare to offend these bandits. They would regularly send some protection money to them so that they wouldn't be attacked.

This time, in this area, there were seasoned travellers of the canyon, and they could see at a glance that Zhao Hai's group were newcomers and had never passed by the canyon before. And looking at the strength of Zhao Hai's group, they wanted to know how they would deal with the bandits. Therefore, there were quite the number of people keeping track of Zhao Hai's campsite, looking at how they would deal with the situation.

These people didn't expect Zhao Hai to make such a brilliant move. With a thousand coins, they didn't only erase the crisis, they also developed some connections with the bandits. If they pass through this canyon again, these bandits would certainly give them some face.

Because of Zhao Hai's action, he managed to attract a lot of

attention. They wanted to see where these people came from, their way of doing things was very unique.

That evening, nothing else happened inside Lifeline Canyon. The next morning, Zhao Hai got up and saw that the mercenary bandits were really acting as his night guards, moreover they were very spirited while doing so.

This was especially true for the bearded man, when he saw that Zhao Hai had come out, he immediately welcomed him with a salute, "Mister, you've woken up. We brothers should also leave now. I ask mister to take care, I can guarantee that as long as mister continues to use the same carriage to pass through, nobody would disturb mister."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Good, you've worked hard. Right, I have something to give you, Blockhead, go get two bags of rations." When Blockhead heard the command, he went to their supply carriage and fetched two big bags of food, weighing a few hundred jin each, sufficient for these group to stuff themselves full a couple of times.

Blockhead placed the bags in front of the bearded man. Zhao Hai smiled and said, "These rations were made by the beastmen. If you want to consume it, just take a piece and add it to a pot to boil, then you can eat it. Don't underestimate these two bags of rations, the two of them were made from four agralis worth of meat each. These two bags should be enough for your brothers to eat for three or four meals. Take it, it's my small gift to you."

When the bearded man heard Zhao Hai, he couldn't help but be stunned for a moment. Then he gratefully said, "Thank you very much, Mister." Although these bandits weren't far from Cold Wind Fortress and Hundred Battles Fortress, they still need to control the roads and perform raids. So generally, they would live their lives in the wilderness, feeding on dry flatbread for food. Hearing about Zhao Hai's rations, they couldn't help but get happy, for them these rations were rare delicacies.

Zhao Hai didn't care about their reactions and only smiled, "Good, you can go. We should also be hurrying along." The bearded man called two brothers over to get the bags of food, then they bowed to Zhao Hai and retreated to the mountains.

At this time, Laura and the others walked out of the tent. Laura looked at Zhao Hai and smiled, "For bandits to be like this, it's my first time seeing it. Interesting."

Zhao Hai didn't say anything, he faintly smiled then replied, "It's not that easy. Forget it, let's eat something then let's get ready for the road."

At this moment Jill arrived, he bowed to Zhao Hai and said, "We thank Mister Wales for last night, the young lady has sent me to represent her in expressing our gratitude."

Zhao Hai waved his hand, "Forget it, it's only a small matter, no big deal. You guys should also get ready. We'll be on our way soon." Jill nodded then returned to their camp to get ready as they needed hurry along to arrive at Rosen Empire's territory.

Chapter 336 – Freewind Merchant Company

Soon, Zhao Hai's camp started being collected, after which they will immediately leave. But at this time, they saw a man walking towards their camp.

The person wore elegant garments, but not the type worn by Nobles. Although he wore commoner type clothes, Zhao Hai could see that the man had quite the temperament hidden inside. Additionally, if one were to closely investigate the material used to make his garment, one could see that it costs an entire year's worth of income for ordinary mercenaries.

Zhao Hai looked at the person walking towards him curiously, the person didn't bring a weapon and he wore a smile on his face, he didn't look like a threat.

Well aware of customs, the man stopped about 5 meters away from Zhao Hai's carriage and bowed to Zhao Hai as he said, "Mister, this one is Freewind Merchant Company's servant. I didn't have any other purpose coming today other than to wish to accompany mister on his travel. I don't know if mister can agree to this one's request?"

Zhao Hai was surprised, even though the man looked ordinary, his convoy wasn't small. Looking at it, Zhao Hai could count about more than 200 carriages.

The man looked at Zhao Hai's reaction and quickly added, "Mister, please don't misunderstand. We didn't offend any bandits inside the canyon. Our Freewind Merchant Company had a hundred years of history doing trades between Rosen Empire and Aksu Empire. I have become familiar with the other travellers in the canyon, this time, I wanted to accompany mister and get to know you, I bear no ill intent."

Zhao Hai looked at the man as he showed a faint smile and said, "Good, this is my first time travelling towards Rosen Empire and

we don't know the local custom, so I may ask mister about them. This one's name is Wales, mister is?"

The man quickly replied, "This one is Freewind Merchant Company's servant, Storm. We'll follow mister immediately when mister's camp gets settled."

Zhao Hai faintly smiled then replied, "Very well, we'll go set out together, mister Storm." Storm smiled then returned to his convoy.

Zhao Hai didn't understand Storm's intentions. Why did he want to suddenly travel together with him. After entering his carriage, Zhao Hai asked Laura, "Laura, have you heard about Freewind Merchant Company?"

Laura nodded, "Of course I've heard of them. Freewind Merchant Company is a medium-sized company inside Rosen Empire. Their scale of operations isn't that big, they trade frequently between Rosen Empire and Aksu Empire, going back and forth. But because Purcell Duchy is quite far, their company's operations didn't reach there.

Zhao Hai nodded and asked again, "What about their reputation? We're currently going blind entering Rosen Empire. It would be great to have someone who clearly knows what's happening inside."

Laura nodded, "Their reputation is very good, their company is famous for their honesty and trustworthiness. Although they aren't a large-sized company between the Rosen and Aksu Empires, they're quite famous in the business community."

Zhao Hai smiled, "That's good, but why do you think they approached me this time? We didn't have any contact with them, and we only have two carriages. And seeing the carriages we use, it was clear that we don't intend to do business."

Laura smiled faintly, "Although we don't look like we're doing

business, but you're someone who would become very important in the future. Don't forget that you've not only shown a power of a 7th rank, you also dealt with the bandits brilliantly. In addition to giving them some coins, you also had them act as your night guards, attracting admiration to you. How could they overlook such qualities?"

Zhao Hai smiled a little, "I just don't want to make enemies out of those mercenary bandits. Think about it, there were a lot of groups surrounding our camp, so it was impossible for their night guards to not notice the bandits. But why did they pretend to not see them? It clearly showed that there's some special relationships going on inside the canyon. Therefore, I chose to not offend those bandits."

Actually, when Zhao Hai saw these bandits, the first thing that came to his mind were those protection agencies (Biāojú) mentioned in novels back on Earth. The men from these agencies would set up an area where they'll ask for "protection money", they even inform travellers about their agency.

Just like what novels show, when erecting these agencies, one needs sufficient strength and background. One should make sure that they don't get underestimated, or else the people passing by your territory won't give you much face.

These bandits would steal goods from the canyon and sell them to either Cold Wind Fortress or Hundred Battles Fortress. It's impossible to think that these bandits have no relation to anyone inside those two places. Zhao Hai didn't reach Hundred Battles Fortress yet, and he didn't want to provoke the garrison there, so he decided to just give 1,000 gold coins to the bandits.

Naturally, Laura didn't have anything to say regarding this method. Even though 1,000 gold coins was a lot of money to ordinary people, to Laura and the group, those coins were just spare change. Spending 1,000 gold coins to establish rapport with the bandits, as well as having them act as their night guard was

very well worth it.

As soon as their convoy departed, they heard a voice sounding out nearby, “Mister Wales, might I have the honor in inviting you inside my carriage? I have prepared some dishes as well as some fruit wine. How about having a drink?”

Zhao Hai smiled and turned to Laura, “I’ll go and take a look.” Then he laughed loudly and replied, “I was thinking the same thing.” Then he opened his carriage door and walked outside.

As the carriage outside slowed down to a halt, Zhao Hai inspected it. The carriage was structurally the same as his, but this one was horse-drawn. And the horse wasn’t any ordinary horse, but instead it was a flaming horse. Storm was sitting inside the carriage smiling at Zhao Hai.

The two carriages were close to each other, as long as one took a few strides they would arrive at the other carriage. Zhao Hai smiled and walked toward Storm.

Storm welcomed Zhao Hai to his carriage. The carriage’s interior was similar to Zhao Hai’s. All essential furniture were there, it seemed like this kind of design was quite famous in the continent.

On the carriage’s table, there were four small dishes present as well as two glasses filled with wine. Zhao Hai looked at the dishes and they turned out to be magic vegetables popular in the continent. They were also cooked very well, although the quantity was small, the dishes looked very refined.

One must know that eating magic vegetables during winter was very hard for commoners to do. For the numerous commoners in the continent, they would only eat rice and pickled food during the winter, some even had no pickled food.

Zhao Hai didn’t say anything, Laura once said that Freewind Merchant Company was a medium-sized company. Medium-sized companies held extraordinary status in the continent. Laura’s

Magic Lily Store back at Purcell Duchy, even though it had quite the number of customers, could only be classified as a small-sized company if placed on the continent's stage.

After Storm invited Zhao Hai to sit down, he held his wine glass and said, "Being able to meet mister on this journey was a kind of fated encounter, so let me offer this glass to mister, cheers." Zhao Hai also held his wine glass and clinked it with Storm's, "Cheers."

Taking a small sip of his liquor, Zhao Hai then placed it down and asked while smiling, "Why did Mister Storm suddenly want to travel with me today?"

Storm froze for a moment, he didn't think that Zhao Hai would go straight to the point, but he recovered and smiled, "The method that Mister used last night was very beautiful. I must be honest to mister, all the people in the canyon knew about these bandits. We saw that mister was a newcomer so we already knew that you would get raided tonight. However, mister handled the matter beautifully. When I saw it, my heart couldn't help but feel admiration."

Zhao Hai smiled, "Mister is too polite. Actually, it was quite easy for me to exterminate those bandits. But I'm afraid that they were related to some people inside Cold Wind Fortress and Hundred Battles Fortress, so I didn't dare make a move on them."

Storm nodded, "Mister is right. These bandits indeed have connections inside Cold Wind and Hundred Battles. Don't think that all of the loot that these bandits acquire would end up entirely as their belongings. Most of their earnings were handed over to the people inside the two fortresses. We're also aware of this kind of thing."

Zhao Hai was confused and asked, "But why do they do this? Isn't it just the same if they ask for tariffs directly at the fortress?"

Storm smiled faintly and replied, "Didn't you notice? Most of the convoys inside Lifeline Canyon belong to great nobilities. Do you

think that the fortress garrison had any courage to ask for tariffs to these convoys? The bandits was the plan the garrison thought of in order to recoup their losses. Everyone understood this, so they couldn't just exterminate those bandits."

Zhao Hai nodded, he understood that what Storm said was the truth. One couldn't underestimate the power of the great nobilities in the continent. All the people who did so ended up dead. The great nobles indeed have the influence to prevent the garrison from asking them for tariffs.

So the easiest method to use were bandits. They would be the ones robbing small convoys passing through Lifeline as the garrison wouldn't be able to do so. Even if those great nobles think that using bandits were excessive, it was a good trade-off in exchange of being in conflict with the garrison because of tariffs.

Storm looked at Zhao Hai and smiled, "What does mister intend to do inside Rosen Empire? Looking at the emblem on your carriage, it looks like you're a person from Akus Empire's Purcell Duchy. And from those carriages behind you, it looks like they were from the Purcell Family's direct line. Am I right?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "Correct, I'm a viscount of Purcell Duchy. I came to do something in Sky Water City. The carriages behind me belonged to the Purcell Family's young lady. She's going to Carson City to study."

Storm began to nod and said, "Sky Water City is really a good place, being a port city, it's very good for trade. Moreover, the tax in the city is very low. Going there to do business is a good idea. If you want to do business there, you can tell me."

Chapter 337 – Hundred Battles Fortress

Zhao Hai knew that Storm was probing him, but he didn't care. He was indeed going to do business in Sky Water City, there's no need to hide it. He smiled and said, "It is as mister said, I want to do business there. But since it's still my first time, I wanted to go and see the place for myself first."

Storm smiled and said, "Sky Water City is indeed good. I wonder what kind of business Mister will do there?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "I have some business in the Beastman Prairie and I don't want to sell at Purcell Duchy anymore. I want to go and see Sky Water City because I heard that there were ships heading to the prairie from there."

Storm didn't suspect a single word from Zhao Hai. There were a lot of merchants doing business between Rosen Empire and the prairie. There's nothing strange about it since doing business between Rosen Empire and the prairie was legal and the tax wasn't high. Unlike Aksu empire where merchants would resort to smuggling, going through a lot of trouble in order to pass through. So there were a lot of people who saw that doing business inside Rosen Empire was cheaper than in Aksu Empire and decided to transfer.

There's a reason for this. Rosen Empire and the prairie was divided by the Aksu Empire. So when the beastmen performed their raids, Aksu Empire would take the attack first. For the people in Rosen Empire, the prairie naturally wasn't a problem. So they didn't impose strict restrictions regarding trade there. But Aksu Empire needed to heavily restrict trade, because if they didn't do so, they end up helping the enemy beastmen instead.

So every year, there were many merchants migrating from Aksu Empire towards Rosen Empire to do business with the prairie. And as time passes and these merchants settle inside the empire, they

would gradually become citizens.

Storm was curious about Zhao Hai's business. He looked at Zhao Hai and asked, "Mister has a business in the prairie? So are you quite close with the beastmen? Is business with the prairie quite profitable?"

Zhao Hai smiled, "Quite profitable, doing business with the prairie is quite good. Beastmen lack grains, commodities, basically everything. As long as you bring some of them in the prairie, you can bring cattle and argali back with you. But when those animals get to the continent, they would generally get sick, making it very difficult to take care of them. So we would slaughter them to be made into products. Wool products in the prairie are also good. They're quite in demand in the continent."

Storm's brow went up and asked Zhao Hai further, "But is there any risk doing business there?"

Zhao Hai replied, "Naturally, there are quite huge risks. Some beastmen may come and raid you at any time, but most of the time they would just steal some food, choosing not to kill anyone. However, most of them would do business with you. In the end, the legend of making easy money there isn't true."

Storm nodded, he agreed with Zhao Hai's words. Although you could make huge profits in the prairie, the risks were also equally huge. He had seen many merchants chasing business in the prairie but failed to do so.

Zhao Hai asked Storm about Rosen Empire. Storm wasn't stingy and told Zhao Hai everything he knew about the empire.

However, Storm's information was quite the same with what Shue said, so Zhao Hai didn't reap quite the harvest this time. The two people continued chatting while the carriage pushed forward. The road was also very peaceful.

Before long, their carriage began to slow down, Storm smiled at

Zhao Hai and said, “We must have reached Hundred Battles Fortress. Everyone is lining up to enter, I will not hold Mister, I still need to pay tariffs. Mister also needs to register, you should go back and prepare.”

Zhao Hai nodded and stood up to say goodbye to Storm, “Then I’ll have to say my farewells. If you have time to go to Sky Water City, don’t forget to find me, I may also go to Carson City.”

Storm smiled and said, “After Hundred Battles Fortress, there are three roads. The middle road is headed towards Carson City. The left road is towards Sky Water city, while the right path heads to Buli City. I’m headed towards Buli City, so if mister ever heads there, you can look for me. As long as you look for Freewind Merchant Company and inquire for Storm, you will find me.”

Zhao Hai nodded, “Good, I’ll certainly visit when I have the opportunity. Well then, goodbye.” He said as he opened the door and headed to his carriage. Zhao Hai didn’t immediately enter his carriage but instead he looked at Hundred Battles Fortress.

Hundred Battles Fortress looked more impressive than Cold Wind Fortress. Its walls reached 25 zhang tall (~250 feet). The fort looked like a giant beast blocking the entire width of the canyon. The carriages entering and exiting the fortress looked like ants compared to the structure.

Zhao Hai didn’t think that he would see such high walls in the continent. He couldn’t understand how the people in Ark Continent was able to construct such wall.

However, when he thought about the mysterious magics, he relaxed. This world has Magic spells as well as Divergent Abilities, anything was possible here.

Looking at the carriages in front of him, there were actually thousands of them. He didn’t know when their turn will come. But he didn’t become impatient. He returned to the carriage to chat with Laura.

When Zhao Hai entered the carriage, Laura stood up and asked, “Brother Hai, how was it? What did Storm discuss with you.”

Zhao Hai laughed and said, “There wasn’t anything noteworthy, we just chatted for a while. But it seems like you are right, he thought my method of dealing with the bandits was brilliant. Also, when I mentioned my business in the prairie, he became strangely less enthusiastic than normal people, it’s quite strange.”

Laura smiled, “Not all merchants in the continent liked doing business in the prairie, and Freewind Merchant Company is one. I heard that from the time they established their business up to the present, they didn’t make a single trade with a beastman. Rumors said that the Freewind Company’s founder had a grudge with beastmen.”

Zhao Hai knit his eyebrows and said, “But Storm asked regarding doing business in the prairie just now. Can it be that they had a desire to do business in the prairie this time?”

Laura thought for a moment and said, “It’s possible. In any case, in the eyes of an ordinary person, doing business in the prairie is very profitable. After abstaining for many years, it is normal if they couldn’t help themselves from doing business with the beastmen.”

Zhao Hai nodded and didn’t say anything more. For Zhao Hai, Storm was only a fleeting person in his life. He was not sure if they would meet again in the future. He looked at Laura and said, “I think we need to send Ruyen to Carson City first. Then we’ll head to Sky Water City. What do you think?”

Laura didn’t object, she nodded and said, “That’s also good, no matter what, she’s still Uncle Evan’s daughter. We should at least send her to Carson City and settle her down. We need to show extreme tolerance.”

Zhao Hai agreed, “When we settle Ruyen, we’ll send Uncle Evan a letter. Even if we complete the task, we won’t know what she’ll

end up doing. If Ruyen offended someone at school, Uncle Evan couldn't do anything about it."

Laura sighed, this time it was Meg who expressed her opinion, "Young Master, I think that we should just go to Sky Water City directly. It's already good for her to get escorted here, everything from here on out depends on her. We should just leave Ruyen on her own, no need for us to take care of her."

Zhao Hai was silent, he knew that Meg hated Ruyen compared to Laura. This was because Ruyen refused first, giving Zhao Hai an awkward situation, which was the reason why Meg hated Ruyen.

Zhao Hai shook his head, "Forget it, we'll escort her to the very end." After he spoke, a voice came from outside, "To the people listening inside the carriage, please pay your tariff, and if you're not a Rosen Empire citizen, please have yourself registered."

Zhao Hai didn't do anything. These matters were for Shue and Shun to do, they didn't need to worry. No matter what, the garrison troops wouldn't embarrass them since they were still nobles. These small soldiers wouldn't dare go too far.

Shue paid two gold coins as tax and carried on with a simple registration, then they were allowed to continue on by the garrison. For Zhao Hai, two gold coins as tax was not cheap. There were only two carriages in their convoy, they actually took a coin for each carriage. The tax seemed quite too high.

He didn't know that this was because they were people from Aksu Empire. If they were Rosen Empire citizens, a silver coin would have been enough, nobles could even be exempt. But Aksu Empire nobles were not exempted from tax, actually it was quite opposite, they were taxed heavily.

Therefore, when Aksu Empire people did business inside Rosen Empire, they would rather buy a title inside the empire than use their identity as Aksu Empire citizens. This is also one method of Rosen Empire to attract citizens.

Before long, Zhao Hai's convoy entered Hundred Battles Fortress. Once they entered the fortress, Zhao Hai opened his window and looked out. Unlike Cold Wind Fort, where the roads looked very ruined and mercenaries in full armor were ever present, Hundred Battles fortress' streets were very neat. There were shops on both sides of the street. Pedestrians were hurrying along, looking very lively. Comparing here and Cold Wind Fortress was like comparing two vastly different worlds with each other.

Zhao Hai didn't plan to immediately leave Hundred Battles Fortress, he wanted to recuperate here for one evening and then go take a walk tomorrow and take in the customs of the people in Rosen Empire.

Since Cold Wind Fortress had a branch of Shelley Hotel, it was impossible for Hundred Battles Fortress to not have one. So when they were choosing where they would stay, they went directly towards Shelley Hotel.

However, when he arrived at the hotel, Zhao Hai noticed a difference. At Cold Wind City, the Shelley Hotel there was very good and business was booming. But here at Hundred Battles Fortress, the business seemed to be bleak. It looked like this hotel branch was failing.

However, the attendant of the hotel was very enthusiastic, even more than the one back at Cold Wind City. They immediately booked accommodations for Zhao Hai's group. Even their magic beasts were taken care of. This made Zhao Hai feel very comfortable.

Chapter 338 – Spies

Ruyen also followed Zhao Hai's decision to stay at Shelley Hotel. All this time, Ruyen was a bit too behaved. Her silence made Zhao Hai uneasy and wondering what kind of schemes she was concocting.

The group entered their suite. When they sat down, Zhao Hai turned to Shue and Shun, "Shue. Shun, you guys go and find out what's going on in this Shelley Hotel. Find out why this business looks very bleak and empty." The two nodded then walked away.

Laura looked at Zhao Hai and asked, "Why do we need to know? Even if there's a problem, it's Shelley Family's matter. What does this have to do with us?"

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "I want to find out which business managed to choke Shelley Family. If that person belongs to Rosen Empire, we may need to keep our eyes open, as such person isn't ordinary. Since we may even get to meet them in the future, it's better to have prior knowledge."

Laura thought for a moment and nodded, "You're right, people who dared contest the Shelley Family couldn't be simple. For these huge business companies, there are many ways other than pure commercial prowess in competing for the market. If they wouldn't use their other, easier, means, then wouldn't they just be wasting resources?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "So I have to pay attention to who is competing with Shelley Hotel. In any case, we're already inside Rosen Empire, and we cannot continue staying in Purcell duchy, other than here, we don't have any other more suitable place in the continent to stay in."

Laura agreed, "If we're unable to stay here as well as in the Purcell Duchy, I'm afraid we only have to stay inside the Beastman Prairie."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, “Well, to be honest, I actually liked associating with the beastmen. Mostly because they don’t have so much plotting minds as the Humans.”

Laura smiled and said, “I also like hanging out with them, they’re simpler and didn’t overthink about everything. Right, Brother Hai, didn’t you say that Ruyen had been quiet lately, probably plotting? Are you sure?”

Zhao Hai shook his head, “I cannot understand that woman’s mind. Forget it, we’ll just drop her off in Carson City, then we’ll set off. She couldn’t mess with us any longer after that.”

At this time, a knock could be heard at the door. Blockhead immediately went forward and asked, “Who is it?”

Jill’s voice could be heard from outside, “Jill seeks an audience with Mister Wales.”

Blockhead turned to Zhao Hai, Zhao Hai nodded, then Blockhead opened the door and asked Jill to come in. Jill looked at Laura and the others and froze for a moment, logically, from Laura and the other’s status, they shouldn’t be allowed to sit along with Zhao Hai. But he didn’t care about that this time, he gave a salute to Zhao Hai and said, “Mister, the young lady wants to ask mister whether you’ll still be travelling with us?”

Zhao Hai stared for a moment, then he nodded, “Yes. We will go to Carson City first, then head towards Sky Water City. Why did you ask?”

Jill gave a bow to Zhao Hai and said, “There’s nothing, Jill wants to thank mister wales. Her highness was not sensible and have angered mister. Please forgive her.”

Zhao Hai shook his head, “Consider that matter finished, this time I’ll let it go in respect for Grand Duke Evan’s face. I don’t care about what she did, but I hope that she won’t bother me in the future. To be honest, when I told the Grand Duke about what she

did, he told me to just leave her alone. But I didn't do it, but only this time. I hope that Ruyen doesn't go and challenge my bottom line, otherwise I wouldn't be polite. I don't care about the title, I'm just grateful for the Grand Duke. But this does not mean that I'll compromise my safety in exchange for her amusement."

Zhao Hai knew that Jill was sent by Ruyen to find out about his mood. So he simply explained the matter that if Ruyen went too far next time, he wouldn't be polite anymore.

Hearing Zhao Hai, Jill sighed inside. He understood Zhao Hai's temperament, he knew that Zhao Hai didn't care about Ruyen's identity. Zhao Hai didn't make a move previously simply because of his relationship with the Grand Duke. If the young lady continues to annoy him, Jill wouldn't know what will happen.

Zhao Hai sighed as he looked at Jill's appearance, "Go back, I know Ruyen wouldn't listen to your words anyway. No matter what, we'll send her to Carson city first. I'm sure the Grand Duke already informed you, Carson City is different from Casa City, although they only differ by one word, the quality of people present differ by a thousand folds. If she can't fix her attitude, her life will be hell. Don't think that you're smart, nobody in this world is stupid. You can leave."

Jill complied, he bowed and headed out. Looking at the door closing on Jill, Zhao Hai couldn't help but sigh, "For Jill to follow such a master, he really is unlucky."

Laura forced a smile, "Actually, young lady Ruyen's situation is very common among the nobility. People like Fernand are already considered good. I heard that there is even something known as a "noble's right of the first night" inside their territories.[1]

Zhao Hai blinked his eye and asked Laura, "Do we have that sort of thing?"

Laura nodded, then Zhao Hai smiled, "Then when we're in our territory, let's do that."

Laura knew that Zhao Hai was joking, She looked at Zhao Hai and said, “Alright, as long as you work hard.”

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “Forget it, I still want to live comfortably for two years. But these nobles really are a bit too outrageous. We should never allow that to happen inside our territory in the future.”

Laura smiled, “That place is our territory. It’ll be what we want it to be.”

At this time, another set of knocks could be heard from the door. But this time, it was Shue and Shun who came in. They both gave Zhao Hai a salute then said their report, “Young Master, we asked around, Shelley Hotels have always been like this inside Rosen Empire. Inside Rosen Empire, people are more willing to settle inside Lion Hotels. The Lion Hotel chain was opened by Rosen Empire’s Grand Duke Lionheart. He’s one of the most powerful grand duke inside the empire, so he didn’t need to fear the Shelley Family.”

Zhao Hai nodded, it was the typical domestic force versus international force. Seeing that the Shelley Family’s headquarters wasn’t inside Rosen Empire, it was understandable for Grand Duke Lionheart to go head to head with them, even gaining the upper hand inside his home empire. Even though the Shelley Family can be considered as a strong power, a powerful dragon cannot defeat the local snake. Additionally, Grand Duke Lionheart wasn’t the local snake, he was the local dragon.

Laura turned to Shue and said, “Good, you two take a rest. We also need to get up early tomorrow. Also, go tell the hotel to prepare some food for us to eat.”

Before ending their conversation, Shun interjected, “Young Master, Madam, I heard those who settled inside this Shelley Hotel had met bad luck. Do we need to pay attention?”

Zhao Hai and Laura froze, Laura looked at Shun and said,

“Really? Is this information accurate?”

Shun nodded, “It should be true. I heard that when someone from Rosen Empire once stayed inside the hotel, they suffered an accident later on. Because of this, the hotel’s business became dismal.”

Zhao Hai calmed down, then he said, “We just arrived at Rosen Empire but it seems like we already offended someone we shouldn’t. But isn’t Grand Duke Lionheart going too far? Can Shelley Family just turn a blind eye to this?”

Laura shook her head and said, “They definitely won’t, Shelley Family’s power and influence is much bigger than Grand Duke Lionheart. They obviously couldn’t turn a blind eye, but it seems that they couldn’t counterattack yet at this time. It seems like our days ahead wouldn’t be smooth.”

Zhao Hai looked at Laura and said, “What this Grand Duke Lionheart is doing is so excessive, I think that Shelley Family’s counterattack would be tough. If they couldn’t overthrow Lionheart, it would be their downfall. We’re only accessories, but I want to find out how they would deal with us.”

Laura smiled and turned to Zhao Hai, “Brother Hai, do you think that the Shelley Family will use our Milk Wine for their counterattack?”

Zhao Hai froze, he didn’t think of this, but when Laura said it, there could really be a possibility for it to be so. He smiled and said, “Well, if it isn’t used, we’ll just continue selling. We can’t control any other aspect of their dispute.”

Laura waved her hand and said, “Alright, you two go on. You don’t need to worry about this.” Shue and Shun gave their affirmation and then turned away.

Zhao Hai looked at Blockhead and said, “Blockhead, go inform Jill about this and make them prepare. I’m afraid that the road

ahead wouldn't be peaceful."

Blockhead nodded, then he walked out. Zhao Hai looked at Laura and said, "What method do you think the Grand Duke's men will use against us? We just arrived from Aksu Empire, they shouldn't be too excessive right?"

Laura shook her head, "I'm uncertain about that, Grand Duke might just have ordered his men to teach the residents a lesson. But it isn't easy to know what his subordinate might do. In any case, we're in some trouble. If it was just any noble from Rosen Empire, they might hold back, but we're from Aksu Empire, we didn't have any influence here. We aren't afraid of them if they move against us in the dark. What I'm afraid of is that they'll use their authority inside Rosen Empire to deal with us. If that happens, then it won't be easy for us to solve it."

Zhao Hai nodded and frowned, "We're Aksu Empire nobles, would they dare accuse us of crime?"

Laura forced a smile and said, "They will, Rosen Empire citizens think that they're above all others. For them to pin some charges on us isn't impossible."

Zhao Hai was helpless, "If they really dared, then we'll make a fuss. Not only am I a Viscount, I'm also a tri-element Mage. Let's see how they'll handle us then."

Laura nodded, "Right, Mages aren't easy to offend inside the continent. If they really wanted to give us trouble, then we'll reciprocate their efforts."

At this time, Blockhead came back. Zhao Hai looked at him and said, "How was it? Did you send the message?"

Blockhead nodded, "I've told Jill, they prepared themselves, but they're evidently quite worried."

Zhao Hai nodded, "Telling them is enough. You also go and rest, tomorrow we'll leave Hundred Battles Fortress. When we leave, I

want to see how the Grand Duke's men deals with us.”

However, it was a pity that the Grand Duke's men didn't give him that opportunity. They didn't wait for Zhao Hai to leave the next day. They came immediately.

While Zhao Hai's group was eating at the dining hall after resting for a while, sounds of conflict could be heard outside the hotel. Zhao Hai couldn't help but stare at the commotion. Shun immediately went out to find out what's happening, when he came back, he went to Zhao Hai and said, “Young Master, a lot of cavalry came to get you. They said that you are a spy sent by Aksu Empire. The hotel staff stopped them at the entrance.”

Zhao Hai stared blankly, then he turned to Laura and smiled slightly, “I didn't expect them to arrive so soon. We should go and take a look. There are people who came to grab us.” Then he got up, Laura and the others also closely followed him behind.

Ruyen, who was sitting at another table, was listening to Shun's report. When she saw Zhao Hai's reaction, she knew that it was related to what Jill informed her later. Ruyen couldn't stop herself and stood up to take a look at the situation. She wanted to see how Zhao Hai was going to deal with this matter.

Before long, everyone arrived at the hotel's lobby. As soon as they arrived, they heard a sly voice outside, “Shelley Hotel's attendants, do you really want to shelter an enemy spy?”

A calm voice responded, “No matter who he is, he entered our hotel and thus became our guest. Before he leaves our hotel, nobody could enter and disturb him. Who dares to do so would be waging war with our Shelley Family.”

The impudent voice laughed and said, “And how would your Shelley Family wage war? Is the Shelley Family too powerful to circumvent the empire's laws? Know your limitation, or else we won't be polite.”

The calm voice replied, “Shelley Hotel certainly follows the empire’s laws, but we didn’t receive any notification that the guest was a spy before he settled in our hotel. Therefore, he is a legitimate guest at our hotel. And we cannot allow you to bother our guests.”

Chapter 339 – Retreating

Zhao Hai stood at the hotel's lobby quietly. He didn't expect the Shelley Hotel to be this protective even here. They really didn't want to compromise the safety of their guests.

Zhao Hai took a deep breath and calmly headed outside. As he arrived at the door, he noticed at least more than a thousand cavalry soldiers outside, 2 meters away from the hotel's perimeter. They wore fine steel full body armor, carrying a kite shield at their back, and had a sheathed double-handed broadsword on their waists. Additionally, they had knight's spears inserted on their saddles, with a triangular flag accessory on the spearhead that looked eye catching when blown by the wind.

The horse that they rode in were also extraordinary. Although they were horses, all of them were nearly four meters tall with a pure black body. There were two curved long horns on their head as well as red eyes, they looked very terrifying.

Zhao Hai remembers that he had read about these kinds of magic beasts in the compendium. They were 5th rank horse-type magic beasts with a simple name, Devil Horses! They had the dark attribute, can be as tall as six meters, with high magic talent. They can cast blood magic's 'Siphon', dark element spells 'Weaken', 'Slow', and 'Confusion', they're very difficult to deal with.

Zhao Hai also noted the saddles the cavalry used, they were specially designed with two stirrups on both sides, allowing for easier mounting.

When the leading knight saw Zhao Hai, he didn't take note of him. For the knight, Zhao Hai was just merely a tool used to cause trouble with Shelley Hotel. Even if Zhao Hai didn't come today, they would still find trouble with the hotel.

In his mind, he didn't have any beef with Zhao Hai, only with the hotel. He needed something or someone as an excuse, as to

whoever they used, he didn't care.

But he didn't know that he just offended someone he shouldn't. He thought that the other party as just a pawn that he could use casually and then discard at will. He didn't expect that this piece he used today would be covered with thorns.

Zhao Hai looked at the knight and said, "I heard that you are looking for me? May I know why?"

The knight turned his head to Zhao Hai and demanded, "Wales, you're suspected for being a spy, you'll have to come with us." The knight understood Shelley Hotel clearly. He knew that the hotel will not let him take their guests easily. As the matter stands, he has no way to trash the hotel, but the resident can be coaxed to leave.

Zhao Hai looked at the knight and smiled faintly, "I am an Aksu Empire noble, what evidence do you have to prove that I am indeed a spy? If you don't have one, then I'll assume that the Rosen Empire is insulting my Aksu Empire's nobles. It will surely develop into a diplomatic dispute."

The Knight didn't care about Zhao Hai's words, he shouted, "Don't waste your breath, you're in Rosen Empire so you'll need to follow the customs of the empire. Obediently follow us, or else it would be messy."

Just as the hotel attendant was about to say something. Zhao Hai's face sank, "Sir Knight has such great courage, what a pity that you annoyed someone you shouldn't annoy". Upon hearing Zhao Hai's words, the knight couldn't help but stare at Zhao Hai. This was because he couldn't see anything special in him.

At the same time, Zhao Hai waved his staff and one giant golem after another started to appear. In the end, there were more than 20 of them.

When the Knight saw what just happened, his complexion sank.

He didn't think that Zhao Hai was a mage, with a high rank at that. Being able to summon this many stone golems without muttering a spell was an amazing feat.

The Knight grabbed his spear and reached for his shield. At the same time he commanded, "Prepare to meet the enemy! Go backwards and prepare the formation."

The knights behind him were obviously well-trained. They quickly prepared like the head knight and drove their mounts to slowly retreat. They slowly drew back and prepared for a sufficient distance for a charge. For heavy cavalry like them, the might of their charges were quite formidable. At minimum, their charge would be able penetrate at least five layers of infantry.

Zhao Hai waved his staff a second time and with a soft voice he said, "Bind!". Strands of wind immediately wrapped around the mount's legs, making them very sluggish. The Cavalry's movements suddenly slowed considerably.

The head Knight's face sank even more. He was a veteran soldier who had experienced a lot of battles. He knew that Zhao Hai just used wind element magic, making him a dual-element mage. No matter where they were, this was a type of person that a small knight like him can't afford to offend.

Unfortunately for him, Zhao Hai's spectacle hasn't ended yet. Zhao Hai waved his staff a third time and said, "Engulf!". The knights, who were slowly retreating, were suddenly surrounded by a huge fiery circle. The fires were roaring, were about a meter high, and seemed to get closer bit by bit, it looked extremely menacing.

Most magic Beasts, with the exception of those with fire attribute, were terrified of fire. When the fires came out, the knights' mounts immediately felt hesitant. But since they were well trained mounts, they calmed down after a time of coaxing. However, the head knight's complexion was extremely ugly, he

knew that he just offended a tri-element mage.

Zhao Hai coldly looked at the Knight and in a deep voice he said, “Stop, if you dare move, I won’t be polite.”

The head knight knew that Zhao Hai was serious. If Zhao Hai really wanted to deal with them, he wouldn’t trap them here. He could just have the stone golems directly attack.

The Knight stopped and bowed to Zhao Hai, “We have offended mister, please forgive me. This time it was a misunderstanding, a false report might have been given. Please forgive us.”

Zhao Hai looked at the head knight, “Good, since you said so I wouldn’t hold you for much longer. I just don’t want to be disturbed again. You can go.” Then he waved his hand as the stone golems, binding spell, and the fiery circle vanished.

Seeing Zhao Hai retrieve his spells, the head knight could help but release a sigh of relief. He bowed to Zhao Hai and said, “I thank mister, myself and the others will now excuse ourselves.” He said as he gave a signal for the others to retreat.

Zhao Hai didn’t want to give these knights a heavy punishment. He was clear that he was currently inside Rosen Empire, and their status was that of Aksu Empire citizens. If they had a deep conflict with the knights, he feared that the Rosen Empire wouldn’t let him off lightly.

He also knew that the other party only came to cause trouble for the hotel and not to him. Naturally, the other party also wouldn’t want to offend a formidable Mage.

Looking at the retreating cavalry, the hotel manager immediately went to Zhao Hai and bowed, “Thanks a lot mister. It was our mistake to disturb mister’s rest, please let the payment for mister’s room be our apology.”

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile and said, “Manager doesn’t need to be too polite, me and your Shelley hotel could be said to have a

little friendship. I had some dealings with Manager Illin from Sarte City, so we could say that I have some connections to the hotel.”

Hearing Zhao Hai, the manager couldn't help but stare as though he remembered something. He immediately expressed his happiness and said, “So you were that Mister Wales, I had been very rude to mister, please forgive me.” Then he invited Zhao Hai back to the hotel.

After Zhao Hai had his meal, he was invited to the manager's office and sat down. Upon sitting down, the manager immediately said, “Mister Wales, let me introduce myself. My name is Fuin, the manager for Hundred Battles Fortress' Shelley Hotel. A few days ago, I had actually received a message from Illin saying that we had a cooperation with mister Wales. But since there were a lot of things currently going on in my branch, I didn't manage to pay mister any attention, I ask mister to forgive me.”

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile and said, “Manager Fuin shouldn't be too polite. I only intend to pass through here, it's no big deal, Manager doesn't need to worry about it.”

Fuin smiled as he replied, “No matter what, we had been rude. Along with Illin's message, he asked us to pay special attention to mister, he said that mister doesn't need to pay as long as he stays at our hotels. I had been very busy lately so I didn't notice mister's arrival. In a sense, I had to thank those knights, or else I wouldn't know that mister has arrived. Hehe. If I didn't know, Illin would never forgive me for asking for mister's money. He certainly wouldn't let me off.”

Zhao Hai smiled, “Manager is too kind. We're immediately heading to Carson City tomorrow, no need to trouble yourself.”

Fuin wore an apologetic face as he talked to Zhao Hai, “Mister Wales, I'm afraid that your travels this time would be a bit troublesome. A strong power inside the empire had been looking for trouble with us. This time, mister offended those knights, so

they might retaliate. The person who wanted to get rid of us has a very high standing inside Rosen Empire. I fear that he wouldn't just let mister off lightly, so he might bother mister quite often. I ask mister to forgive us."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "You're talking about Grand Duke Lionheart right? Be relieved, we've already mentally prepared ourselves. Nothing bad will happen to us, manager Fuin doesn't need to worry too much. Right, manager, I have to go back and rest. We still need to leave tomorrow." Then he stood up and left after assuring Fuin to not worry.

Fuin didn't think that Zhao Hai would know that the person giving the hotel its troubles was Grand Duke Lionheart. Fuin felt the depth of Zhao Hai's capabilities.

Fuin had known that Zhao Hai hadn't visited Rosen Empire before. He just arrived at Hundred Battles Fortress for less than a day and immediately knew that Grand Duke Lionheart was the hotel's rival? Did he have his own information agency inside Rosen Empire?

Fuin thought that the family needed to be informed about this. Their previous information regarding Wales was quite lacking. Zhao Hai's origin was a mystery, but they were sure that him and Purcell Family had some sort of connection. But now it seemed that it wasn't entirely like what it was. At the very least, Purcell Duchy's arms shouldn't be able to reach Rosen Empire.

Chapter 340 – Planning

Actually, Zhao Hai deliberately mentioned Grand Duke Lionheart to Fuin. He wanted to make Fuin think that he's not clueless about everything, making his image in Fuin's mind a bit blurry. It's a simple trick.

Sometimes people speak a little, but sometimes speaking more can achieve the same result. Just like what Zhao Hai had done, just by mentioning that he knew about Grand Duke Lionheart, he made Fuin wonder even more about his origins. This was done so that the next time he and Shelley Hotel does business, he wouldn't be underestimated.

When he returned to his room, Zhao Hai was met by a frowning Laura, "Brother Hai, although we made the cavalry retreat, it's possible that they wouldn't just let us off lightly. We need to make proper preparations just in case."

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile and said, "Of course they wouldn't just leave it like that. Even if the cavalry is fine with us, the Grand Duke wouldn't, be especially when a lot of people heard the conversation between me and Fuin about my business with Shelley Family. When he hears about this, the Grand Duke surely wouldn't just sit still. But as long as he doesn't use official means to deal with us, I'm not afraid of him."

Laura continued to frown, "You also intentionally told Fuin the fact that we're on the same side as the Shelley Family. Even though Lionheart didn't have an initial intention to give us trouble, now he really had to, forcing us to fully side with Shelley Family."

Zhao Hai smiled, "Actually this isn't a bad thing, we didn't need to befriend the Grand Duke anyway. Moreover, the methods he works with were extremely overbearing, I don't want to work with him. Although the Shelley Family is a bit calculating, relatively speaking, their way of doing business is quite modest. We will not

suffer losses working with them. I intentionally revealed our connection with the family so that when the Grand Duke decides to deal with us, the family would feel restless. With this, our relationship with them might get even closer.”

Laura relaxed when she heard Zhao Hai’s intentions, but she still couldn’t help but worry, “But is it really good to offend Lionheart just as we entered Rosen Empire? What would happen if Shelley Family loses the fight against the Grand Duke?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly as he replied, “Right now, we’re currently gambling that Shelley Family would win. If they did, our cooperation with them will advance further. And if they lose, it doesn’t matter to us, don’t forget that we’re headed towards Sky Water City. We can rely on our connection with the Calci Family as fellow members of the league. And with Bell’s introduction, the Calci Family would certainly act as middlemen in the conflict, I don’t think Grand Duke will overreach his bounds just for us.”

Laura saw that Zhao Hai had already thought this through, she nodded and said, “What about Ruyen? If the Grand Duke couldn’t deal with us, wouldn’t he cause trouble for Ruyen?”

Zhao Hai nodded, “It’s possible, but no matter what, Ruyen is the Purcell Duchy’s princess. Moreover, she came this time to study. I heard that Rosen Empire’s institute holds a high standing inside the nation, I think Ruyen will be fine.”

Laura nodded. Even though she didn’t like Ruyen, she still needs to consider Evan, thus they just can’t ignore Ruyen’s well-being.

Although Zhao Hai has stated his speculations, Laura was still worried, “What if they cause trouble inside the institute? She’s still a young lady unfamiliar with her surroundings and needs help. I’m afraid that she wouldn’t be able to find help when she wants to. If something were to happen to her, we wouldn’t be able to face Grand Duke Evan.”

Zhao Hai sighed, “We really can’t help her. Actually, Uncle Evan

had her travel far away because he wanted to develop her sense of independence. If everyone was going to help her, Uncle Evan's purpose would have failed."

Laura stared for a moment, she actually forgot about this. She nodded in agreement, the Grand Duke indeed intends to have Ruyen exercise relying only on herself. If they go and help her in her every need, then there's no difference between having her in Casa City or Carson City.

That night, Zhao Hai's surroundings were very calm. The cavalry didn't find any more trouble with them. But now, every merchant inside Hundred Battles fortress have at least heard of Zhao Hai's name. When they were inside Lifeline Canyon, they already knew that Zhao Hai was a 7th rank Fire element Mage. But they didn't think that Zhao Hai's true strength was much more than that.

These merchants became more and more curious of Zhao Hai. He had strength as well as intelligence. All of these buzz made Zhao Hai akin to a firefly in the dark, but more dazzling than that.

The other large forces also began to pay attention to these people who they had never heard before. These large forces knew that they had no chance of pulling Zhao Hai over to their side, but they still wanted to know about him. So that if by chance they manage to get in conflict with him in the future, they may have some ideas on how to deal with him.

Zhao Hai didn't know that these forces had already began to pay attention to him. He thought that he didn't merit such huge attention. The next morning, the group had their breakfast, and under Fuin's farewells, left Hundred Battles Fortress and advanced towards the direction of Carson City.

Ruyen still kept her low profile while on the road. Now, Zhao Hai wasn't worrying about what she would do. Anyway, as long as they manage to escort her to Carson City, their task would have been finished.

Rosen Empire's territory was very large, and their population isn't small either. Therefore, there was no worry for Zhao Hai's group in finding places to stay the night. Shue had spent time in the empire before, so Zhao Hai had him lead the way. They didn't hurry along, instead they moved slowly to better understand Rosen Empire's situation.

At the same time, Zhao Hai was also very vigilant from the time they left Hundred Battles Fortress. They managed to offend those cavalries, so they shouldn't just allow Zhao Hai's group to leave, more so Grand Duke Lionheart who was behind those cavalry.

Even though Zhao Hai hadn't met with Grand Duke Lionheart, he knew about the overbearing methods the Grand Duke usually used. Such overbearing person couldn't even tolerate disobedient subordinates, not to say Zhao Hai who slapped his face.

Furthermore, with Fuin and Zhao Hai showing their amicable relations, looking like long time friends. Lionheart would surely assume Zhao Hai to be Shelley Family's friend, exclusively helping Shelley Hotel. Looking at these facts, it was a definite fact that the Grand Duke will certainly find ways to deal with them.

After leaving Hundred Battles Fortress, Zhao Hai felt that the atmosphere wasn't quite right. The road from Hundred Battles Fortress to Carson City should be very busy at this time, but instead they couldn't see a single person, the scene closely resembled the Black Wastelands.

Zhao Hai knew that there were people who wanted to confront them. He just didn't think that they would go as far as emptying out the entire road just to deal with him. As long as one wasn't a complete idiot, it would be very clear as to why those people would do this.

Zhao Hai looked at the situation and immediately had Laura and the others enter the Space. At the same time he had Blockhead go on standby, he also had someone inform Ruyen of the situation.

Ruyen's group became very serious, they knew that their strengths fell short compared to Zhao Hai.

Two hours after leaving Hundred Battles fortress, they still didn't receive any attacks. Not only did they not receive any attacks, they also didn't meet a single person. This situation brought great pressure to the group. They were tense since they didn't know when the enemy would attack.

They still aren't that far from Kolan Mountain Range, so the area was still very hilly. Oftentimes, there would be two hills on both sides of the road. Although the hills weren't that high, the everpresent trees on the hills were tall and lush, which was a sufficient area to wait for an ambush.

Of the group, Ruyen's guards were the most tensed while Zhao Hai fared better, he sat down inside his carriage gazing at the monitor. If there was to be an ambush nearby, he should be able to detect it.

After another two hours, he still didn't see a single person on the monitor. This made Zhao Hai confused, he didn't expect the other party to have this much patience. After more than two hours, they still managed to keep their hands.

But at this time, the monitor suddenly showed green spots. The green spots were very dense and seem to contain thousands of people. They were placed on the hills on both sides of the road.

Zhao Hai stared for a moment before he pulled the monitor closer. He saw that the other party was a Magic Beast Heavy Cavalry unit. They wore full body armor, carried a shield on their backs, had their greatswords on their sheaths as well as their spears. They were positioned on the slopes on the sides of the hills. It seemed that they were waiting at a distance for their exhausted prey to arrive.

The knights on the hillside didn't bother to hide themselves. They just stood there with their shining armors that Zhao Hai

could see them easily. It seemed like they want to attack Zhao Hai's group in a straightforward manner.

Seeing the situation, Zhao Hai immediately gave his ghost staff to a blood hawk and had it fly to the sky. He wanted to make sure that there weren't any other troops laying in ambush. If there weren't any, he could safely prepare his own counterattack.

The hawk flew at a large circle around their location and didn't spot any other ambush, only these cavalry. It seems like they had extreme confidence that they could kill Zhao Hai, so they didn't prepare any other ambush. This decision helped Zhao Hai since he didn't need to make any other complicated plans, he wanted to have his own Fighting Bull undead cavalry appear. With the upgrades they received, they could be considered as the most elite type of Magic Beast cavalry in the entire continent.

Chapter 341 – Fight! Wipe them out!

People on the continent always knew that Beastmen Cavalry were the strongest cavalry. Although Zhao Hai was sure that his undead cavalry was better than actual beastmen cavalry, he still wanted to see how they fare in an actual cavalry battle.

At this time, Shue also spotted the other party, so he had the carriage stop. Ruyen's carriage also halted, but her guards looked with despair at the enemy cavalry.

These guards were veterans who had fought in many battles. With their eyes, they could see that the cavalry on the hillsides number approximately 5,000 people. For 5,000 cavalry to deal with them was a huge respect, but this also meant that the chances of their escape had reached zero.

In the eyes of the guards, although Zhao Hai was fierce, he was only a single 7th rank mage. Believing that he could face these 5,000 cavalry would be an idiotic move.

Zhao Hai got out of his carriage and gazed towards Ruyen. He was a bit hesitant because Ruyen would be able to see his undead when he releases them. To let Ruyen see the undead would be the same as revealing his secret.

After thinking for a moment, Zhao Hai turned to Shue and said, "Shue, you go tell Ruyen's guards to protect Ruyen. Tell them to not worry as long as they stay with the carriage"

Hearing Zhao Hai's instructions, Shue understood what Zhao Hai was planning. He nodded then turned to inform Ruyen's group. Ruyen's group didn't have any better ideas since the enemy was too strong, so they immediately followed along with Zhao Hai's words.

Shun just joined the group, so he didn't have any idea about Zhao Hai's undead army. This made him completely clueless about Zhao

Hai's plan. At this time, seeing that Ruyen's group had followed his orders, Zhao Hai immediately had them covered by his dark mist, making them unable to see or hear what's happening outside.

Shun looked puzzled at Zhao Hai, he didn't know what Zhao Hai wanted to do. But when he looked at Shue, Blockhead, and Rockhead's anticipating expressions, he didn't say anything. He looked curiously at Zhao Hai, wondering what the young master intends to do.

Zhao Hai looked at Shue's excited face, he smiled faintly and said, "Shue, what are you getting excited for? It still hadn't begun."

Shue smiled and said, "To be able to watch a cavalry battle at this distance is very exciting. Young master, hurry up. We need to deal with them quickly so we could be on the move soon."

Zhao Hai laughed, then he turned to the other party and said very loudly, "All of you! What are you waiting for? Still not ready? Or are you waiting for lunch?"

Shue and Blockhead laughed. The cavalry knights were enraged, they didn't attack because Zhao Hai didn't reach their optimum attack distance. In their minds, since Zhao Hai couldn't escape anyway, why not wait until he reached their best attacking spot? As long as Zhao Hai enters their attacking zone, they would smash him flat with their charge and immediately head back to the fortress.

Hearing what Zhao Hai said, the knights couldn't wait any longer. Their leaders issued several loud cries, then they prepared to hoist their spears and get ready for their charge.

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, he waved his hand and 5,000 undead Fighting Bull cavalry immediately appeared in front of him. They were arranged in a neat square formation, with no unnecessary movements and no sound. They just stood there, dispersing death energy to the surroundings.

Shun was speechless when he saw the Fighting Bull Cavalry. The knights on the hillsides also stared blankly at the undead cavalry. Their heads couldn't help but tilt.

Zhao Hai gave a smile and said, "If you won't charge, then I will." He waved his hand, then the 5,000 undead Fighting Bull cavalry began to divide themselves into two square formations, one for each cavalry unit on each side of the road.

Zhao Hai used the formation management function to lead the undead cavalry. The two squares were finely formed, devoid of chaos. Seeing the two orderly square formations advancing, the knights on the hills couldn't help but take a step back.

Shun was speechless when he saw the undead cavalry, but he was more speechless about Zhao Hai's ability to lead the undead.

Shun had been wandering for many years, he also had contacts with numerous mercenaries. Large mercenary groups would have a cavalry unit under their employ. And their cavalries weren't much worse than regular cavalry. One should know that training cavalry was very difficult, a qualified cavalry unit would need about 2 years worth of training. And even elite cavalry would still have troubles maintaining their formations during an assault. People could be trained to do so, but magic beasts cannot.

But Zhao Hai's charging cavalry didn't have any trouble with formation during their charge. This was definitely not the undead's doing, it could only result on Zhao Hai's control of the undead. Being able to control such number of undead with such precision, Shun had developed a new understanding of Zhao Hai's might.

The cavalry on the hillsides were also startled, they saw that the unit charging at them were undead, but they couldn't believe that they were all zombie undead.

They were well aware that Zombie undead were harder to deal with than other undead creatures. They also knew the difficulty of

producing them.

They now understood that Zhao Hai wasn't a tri-element mage at all. He was a quad-element mage, and was likely to have majored in dark element magic.

But they didn't think too much of it. They were still confident that they would be able to beat those undead. So the leaders quickly stabilized their lines and like the undead Fighting Bull cavalry, also began their charge.

Shun looked at the Undead Cavalry with worry. In his mind, controlling these undead meticulously would be very difficult for Zhao Hai, and the level of undead couldn't have been too high. In this case, these 5,000 undead cavalry wouldn't be able to stop the assault of 5,000 heavy armored cavalry.

A heavy cavalry unit was in itself a very difficult unit to deal with. But their cost for upkeep was too high, so general forces couldn't afford them. The cavalry on the hillsides were also charging downhill, giving their power a huge boost compared to the uphill charging undead. The heavy cavalry believed that they will win the engagement and completely flatten the enemy.

When the four units of cavalry clashed, the heavy cavalry immediately realized their mistake. They didn't expect that each and every one of these undead were terrifyingly fierce. Their striking force surprisingly reached 7th rank. Adding on to the fact that they weren't afraid of getting hurt or dying, these undead proved to be very difficult to deal with.

The charge managed to cut away 3,000 of the heavy cavalry, a loss of more than half of their number. For these heavy cavalry soldiers, this loss was unimaginable. But what made them more sullen was the fact that their undead opponents barely managed to lose as much as they had. Although the knight's spears were inserted onto the undead's bodies, they could still function, and thus continue on to wave their maces around.

What hit them the most was the fact that even though the undead's heads were smashed, they still managed to recover. They didn't imagine that fighting undead was this hard until they had fought with real undead today.

This almost made the cavalry line collapse, but they were experienced soldiers who cannot be easily defeated. After they exchanged positions with the undead cavalry, they saw that they weren't too far away from Zhao Hai's carriage. The leaders of the heavy cavalry immediately issued a few cries. They didn't stop their charge and continued on towards Zhao Hai's carriage. They knew that as long as Zhao Hai gets eliminated, these undead would automatically disappear.

However, the moment they resumed their charge, another group of undead appeared in front of them. These group were the same as the previous group, 5,000 Fighting Bull cavalry. The heavy cavalymen immediately collapsed, they didn't imagine that another undead cavalry unit would arrive, when they saw the unit appear, they saw that their lives were in extreme peril.

And at this moment, the initial group of undead cavalry behind them turned around. Now they were sandwiched both at the back and at the front.

Looking dazed at the side of Zhao Hai, Shun didn't know what to say. He recovered himself and then turned to Zhao Hai, "Young Master, how many undead do you have? You can control these many undead?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Be assured, I can control as much. And how many? I didn't count them but from what I think, I should probably have about seven hundred thousand undead."

Shun stared at Zhao Hai, while stuttering, he said, "Young Master, yo-you, di-did you just say seven hundred thousand?"

Zhao Hai didn't speak but only showed a faint smile. Shue patted Shun's shoulder and said, "Shun, later as you stand by young

master's side, you'll get to know that the young master has many secrets."

Blockhead and Rockhead laughed, they were already used to the Space's magical abilities. Only Shun who was a new addition would get surprised. At this time, the enemy cavalry were already eliminated. However, their mounts were kept alive at the orders of Zhao Hai. These heavy cavalry had a lot of Magic Beasts that Zhao Hai's Space Ranch didn't have.

These were horse type magic beasts, the lowest being 4th rank. Only 4th rank and above were the suitable mounts for heavy cavalry units. Because their armors were too heavy, lower ranked beasts like the flame horses couldn't support their weight, and even if they could, they wouldn't have the endurance to travel long distances.

So the magic beasts that heavy cavalry units generally select were either 4th or 5th rank magic beasts. And since horse type magic beasts were mostly docile, they were the most suited ones to become mounts. Moreover, their carrying capacity was also fairly high. Even though they couldn't compare with bull type magic beasts in strength, their temperaments were much better. These qualities made it so that the majority of heavy cavalry units in the continent would use horse type magic beasts.

Zhao Hai took these magic beasts, upgrading his Ranch to level 9 making Zhao Hai very excited. Now he needs to find more beasts so that his Ranch would reach level 10, he wondered what changes the Ranch would undergo once it reaches that level.

Then, Zhao Hai turned the 5,000 heavy cavalry into undead and stored them inside the Space. After sweeping the battlefield, Zhao Hai undid the dark mist surrounding Ruyen's convoy.

Ruyen was very anxious while inside the dark mist, they didn't dare exit in fear of offending Zhao Hai. Moreover, they also knew that their fate was now closely tied with him. If Zhao Hai lives,

they live, if he dies, then they die. They were very afraid that they wouldn't survive inside Rosen Empire, so they chose to just stay put and wait.

Inside the dark mist, they felt that years had come by, every minute was extremely long. Zhao Hai's fog wasn't any ordinary fog, not only could it block vision, it could also block sounds from entering in. Now the group was completely blind and deaf to the outside, it made them even more anxious.

Just as Ruyen was about to completely lose her patience, the dark mist suddenly vanished. Now, the group could see the outside again. Completely out of their expectations, there was nothing there except from Zhao Hai's convoy. Not even a drop of blood could be seen on the ground.

Zhao Hai wasn't in the mood to explain everything, so he had Shue inform them that they could proceed. Then he went back to his carriage and took the lead. Ruyen, although confused and full of doubts, couldn't do anything aside from following behind.

When evening came, they rested inside a small town. Zhao Hai's group had their dinner and then rested inside the Space. On the other hand, Ruyen couldn't fall asleep, she called Jill and Gonza, the head guard, over to her room. Now that she couldn't sleep, she decided to have a discussion with the two.

Ruyen looked at the two and said, "What do you think about today's matter?"

Gonza and Jill looked at each other, Jill opened his mouth first, "Your highness, I reckon that a battle had taken place outside the mist. Although the place was cleaned up, the heavy smell of blood was still present. What's strange is that there was no trace of magic being used outside, very strange."

Gonza also nodded, "Very strange indeed, moreover, the magic that covered us should be the dark element magic 'Dark Mist', and an advanced level at that. Wales is a fire, wind, and earth element

mage. So how can he use dark magic?”

Chapter 342 – Correctly Guessing the Identity

Ruyen frowned and murmured, “Dark magic, Wales, Prairie, what do these three have to do with each other?”

Jill’s heart jumped, he looked at Ruyen and said, “Your highness, there’s a relation! It’s possible that they have a connection with each other, Zhao Hai!”

Ruyen froze, she was startled, she turned to Jill and said, “You’re talking about Zhao Hai of Stony Mountain? I heard that he’s a Dark Mage, and he likes to turn people into undead.”

Jill nodded, “Correct. Think about it, your highness, Wales knows Dark element magic, and he wasn’t well known before he came from the prairie. Initially, I heard that when Zhao Hai and Laura withdrew, they bought a lot of things that beastmen may need, so they must have went to the prairie to do business. Moreover, after our conflict, the Grand Duke welcomed them inside the mansion as well as gave them a title. This explains that the Grand Duke already knew him from before. So wouldn’t it be likely that Wales is actually Zhao Hai?”

When Ruyen heard Jill’s words, her complexion immediately paled. Zhao Hai’s reputation was quite infamous inside Purcell Duchy. Since she also resides inside the Duchy, Ruyen knew that Zhao Hai had killed no less than a thousand people and also turned them into undead. She couldn’t help but get afraid.

Ruyen suddenly thought about the fairly tall woman on Zhao Hai’s side who always gave her a familiar feeling. Adding on to the fact that Zhao Hai treated the women on his side quite differently than what other aristocrats would do, Ruyen was almost certain that the tall maid was Laura.

Ruyen stood up and murmured while walking around, “So it

turns out to be them. No wonder, no wonder they weren't afraid of the 5,000 heavy cavalry. This Zhao Hai is too tyrannical, why would father want me to travel together with him?

Jill looked at Ruyen and said, "Your highness, I think that the Grand Duke knew that Zhao hai wanted to Rosen Empire for business to he asked him to take care of us along the way. Your highness wouldn't need to worry."

Jill and Ruyen were quite different in their view of Zhao Hai. Unlike Ruyen, Jill wasn't afraid of him, this was because he heard that Zhao Hai wouldn't just kill anyone indiscriminately. The people he killed were only those who wanted to kill him. And when the Purcell Duchy experienced food shortage, the provided them with help. Such person was unlikely to be a bad human being.

He also knew why Ruyen was afraid, Ruyen previously caused Zhao Hai no small amount of trouble and was afraid that the other party would retaliate against her. Jill wasn't worried, Zhao Hai honored Grand Duke Evans face, so nothing would happen. But if Ruyen offends him again, it would be difficult to say. Dark Mages were notoriously moody, which explains Ruyen's current fear of offending Zhao Hai.

Ruyen stopped her footsteps and said, "Seems like father really wanted me to travel with this devil, what was he thinking. We need to arrive at Carson City as soon as possible, I don't want to become an undead. You go rest, tomorrow we need to hurry along." Jill and Gonza complied, then turned around to leave.

Ruyen was just lying down without sleep until morning came. To be honest, she was absolutely terrified of Zhao Hai. Although she didn't believe all the rumors inside Purcell Duchy, she knew that it was possible that the family once wanted to deal with Zhao Hai. At that time, it was her grandfather who still held power, and she was clear about Zhao Hai's matters. She knew that whoever crosses Zhao Hai wouldn't come back alive. She knew how Zhao Hai deals

with his enemies.

Just like what Jill thought, Ruyen was afraid of Zhao Hai's retaliation. She knew that she caused quite the trouble for Zhao Hai before.

Originally, Ruyen wanted to wait until she arrived at Carson City to deal with Zhao Hai. She wasn't stupid, she knew that it was her first time outside, so she decided to just cooperate with Zhao Hai. But now it was different, now that she knew who this Mister Wales really was, she immediately decided to head out.

Ruyen didn't think of exposing Zhao Hai's identity. It may have been useful inside Aksu Empire, because she knew that Zhao Hai retreated because he had offended Southern King. But they were currently inside Rosen Empire, even though Southern King had a good grip inside Aksu Empire, he wouldn't be able to make his moves inside Rosen Empire. If she exposes Zhao Hai's identity now, not only would it be useless, it would also prompt Zhao Hai to deal with her.

Zhao Hai didn't feel anything about what happened today. Although they had eliminated 5,000 armored cavalry, such scenes were already quite familiar to him. It may lead to Lionheart's family wanting to take revenge, but they were not afraid of Lionheart. After all, after the 5,000 cavalry were eliminated, there were no bodies left behind. Zhao Hai believed that the other party couldn't use official means to deal with them. Thus, Zhao Hai wasn't worrying.

The next morning, Zhao Hai's convoy began moving along after they had breakfast. Today was very different than yesterday, the road wasn't empty like before, they could actually see other people as they pass by. This made them feel relieved.

While Zhao Hai's group was calm, Hundred Battles Fortress wasn't. Although Hundred Battles Fortress wasn't under Lionheart's control. With his status as a noble with huge potential,

people inside the fortress would be more than willing to lend him a hand and deal with the people inside Shelley Hotel. Moreover, Grand Duke Lionheart wasn't stingy with those who helped him. For the garrison troops inside Hundred Battles Fortress, helping the Grand Duke was the same as having him owing them a favor. With such a situation, the garrison would find various reasons to mess with Shelley Hotel.

However, they didn't expect to annoy a 7th rank tri-element mage this time. This was not any small matter.

But later on, they heard that Zhao Hai seemed to be very familiar with Shelley Hotel's staff, which made the garrison furious. Just like what Zhao Hai hypothesized, the garrison troops thought that Zhao Hai was specially invited by the hotel to slap their faces. After further inquiry, they found out that Zhao Hai was leaving Hundred Battles Fortress tomorrow and will head towards Carson City. So the troops decided to attack Zhao Hai midway.

However, evening had already passed and the cavalry still didn't return. When they sent some scouts to investigate, they saw that even though they could see some tracks, the cavalry seemed to suddenly vanish.

Five thousand heavy cavalry wasn't a small number. Even the garrison lord of Hundred Battles Fortress didn't have the authority to move 5,000 cavalry during wartime. But this time a unit actually disappeared, it was a disaster.

The garrison troops inside the fortress panicked. It would be possible for 5,000 troops for any other place to get transferred, but what was this place? This was Hundred Battles Fortress, the empire's forefront against Aksu Empire. Rosen Empire already commanded that If someone dared transfer even ten troops outside this fortress, they would be beheaded!

If you were beheaded when you transfer ten troops, then what would happen if you managed to make 5,000 cavalry disappear?

How would you manage it? The garrison lord of Hundred Battles Fortress could already see his tragic ending.

The matter of 5,000 soldiers suddenly disappearing couldn't be hidden. Even if some people were to conceal the truth, there were still people with methods of finding out. The first to do so was Shelley Family.

This matter will certainly be used by Shelley Family against Grand Duke Lionheart. Since the garrison lord knew that it wouldn't be possible for him to survive, he wrote a letter to Grand Duke Lionheart so that he could better prepare, he also requested the Grand Duke to help him take care of his family.

Hundred Battles Fortress' garrison lord was currently alone, so after completing the letter, he had it sent away to the capital, then he committed suicide inside the Lord's Mansion.

The family members of the garrison lord were currently residing inside Carson City. It was a rule made by the empire that every garrison lord of Hundred Battles Fortress must leave his family inside Carson City. This was so that the garrison lords wouldn't even think about revolt and allying with Aksu Empire.

Shelley Family naturally didn't let go of this opportunity, after Fuin heard about the matter, he immediately wrote a letter informing the family, but they were already a step too late. Because of the garrison lord's letter claiming all of the faults, as well as Grand Duke Lionheart's influence inside Rosen Empire, the matter didn't nudge the Grand Duke's power.

Still, Shelley Family was very grateful to Zhao Hai. They knew that the missing 5,000 cavalry was related to him. Although they didn't believe that Zhao Hai could deal with 5,000 calvary, they knew where the 5,000 was headed, which was towards Zhao Hai. So Shelley Family began preparing to send people to protect him.

Zhao Hai didn't know about any of these. The convoy was still moving slowly on the road and stopped to rest during the

evenings, there wasn't any point of peculiarity.

However, Zhao Hai noticed an issue with Ruyen's convoy. Although the two departed at the same time, the other party seemed to put a lot more distance between the two of them. Zhao Hai was very confused as to what Ruyen was doing.

During the evening, Ruyen appeared very solemn. And she surprisingly chose not to eat at the dining hall but instead she had the hotel deliver her meals to her suite. She looked like she was hiding from Zhao Hai.

After Zhao Hai and his group had eaten their meals, he looked at Laura and asked, "If you say that Ruyen was still angry, then why did she seem to be running away from us?"

Laura coldly snorted, "Maybe it's because she didn't want to be implicated. After all, people wanted to deal with us because of our connection with Shelley Family. She might be afraid being associated with us, so she just hid."

Zhao Hai said, "Will it? Grand Duke Lionheart surely knows that she traveled with us. Wouldn't her efforts to hide be futile?"

Laura sneered, "Who knows, maybe the young lady thinks like that."

Chapter 343 – Mercenaries

Ruyen became even more alienated to Zhao Hai these past days, but she was actually happy with it. She didn't want to associate with Zhao Hai, he was too scary

At this time, Zhao Hai was somewhat surprised these past few days. It had been seven days since they were attacked outside Hundred Battles Fortress. But they didn't encounter any other ones in the seven days that had passed, this was beyond his expectation.

Naturally, he didn't know that Hundred Battles Fortress' garrison lord's body had already gone cold. This absence has created a power vacuum inside Hundred Battles Fortress that a lot of people inside Rosen Empire wanted to fill. Because of this, there simply wasn't any time to consider Zhao Hai.

The position of Hundred Battles Fortress' garrison lord actually didn't have that huge of an authority inside the fortress. Although there were civilians living there, the majority of its inhabitants were still the garrison troops. And only during wartime did the garrison lord have jurisdiction over these soldiers.

However, Hundred Battles Fortress was placed in a very lucrative position. This was one of Rosen Empire's entrances, so everyday tons of merchants would pass through here. The tariffs as well as the loot they receive from the bandits would add up to be a lot of money. Because of this, the position of garrison lord would be changed every five years. But, even with this time restriction, there were still a lot of nobles who were crazily trying to take on the position.

But this situation wouldn't likely to last long because Hundred Battles Fortress was after all the empire's shield. So the position of garrison lord had already been decided during these few days.

This unusual situation was caused by the garrison lord's suicide.

Otherwise, the position wouldn't be vacant for such a long time.

Now that the matter has passed, the implicated Grand Duke Lionheart naturally hated Zhao Hai. Although the garrison lord wasn't his direct subordinate, they two of them had a good relationship. It was an unexpected event that Zhao Hai managed to compel the garrison lord to kill himself. The Grand Duke not only failed to solve his problem, he also suffered no small amount of loss, eventually benefitting Shelley Family. At this moment, how could Lionheart resign? So he naturally had to think up ways to deal with Zhao Hai.

Although Zhao Hai didn't know that Grand Duke Lionheart had pulled back in order to prepare, he didn't reduce his vigilance. He was very clear that offending the Grand Duke inside Rosen Empire was just like offending Southern King inside Aksu Empire.

The reason they had such slow journey these past few days was because Zhao Hai needed to inquire about Lionheart's affairs. Grand Duke Lionheart really did have a large power and influence inside Rosen Empire.

He found out that although Lionheart was titled a Grand Duke, he wasn't always inside his duchy but instead handled matters inside Carson City. This was because he was a trusted subordinate of the current monarch, handling the job of the empire's Head Lord of the Treasury. It was a position carrying a large weight, this was also the reason why he had the gall to face against Shelley Family.

After knowing these information, Zhao Hai became more careful, he knew that because he managed to annoy such a character, his future days wouldn't be any peaceful.

At the eight day, they arrived at a small city called Wright. These days, Zhao Hai avoided Large Cities as much as possible. He knew that the Grand Duke would surely have some people stationed there. If there was danger inside large cities, he might as well stay

in small ones. So if there were trouble, there wouldn't be too much disturbance

Such a small city naturally didn't have a Shelley Hotel. So Zhao Hai and the others went to a hotel in the city named Shri Hotel.

The hotel could only be considered as a medium grade hotel. Although not the largest, its services were quite good, and the place was fairly clean. So Zhao Hai chose this place to stay for the night.

Such hotel was considered low-class in Laura's eyes. Even though Zhao Hai's group rented the best rooms, they weren't comparable to normal rooms at Shelley Hotel. But the place was clean and the facilities inside were also quite adequate.

However, such details weren't important to Zhao Hai. They could just enter the Space and rest there for the night. They didn't need to care about the rooms they stayed in.

Although Ruyen thought that the rooms were very bad, she didn't dare say anything. After guessing Zhao Hai's identity, Ruyen's plots basically vanished, she was afraid of offending Zhao Hai any further.

It was already quite late when the group checked in. So they settled their things and then headed to the hotel's dining hall.

The dining hall was also quite simple. It was on the hotel's first floor, and its size wasn't that small, it was enough to house a hundred guests dining together.

As soon as Zhao Hai's group entered the hall, the hubbub of the guests quieted down. On these medium grade hotels, mercenaries were the common customers. They didn't only live here, they also receive tasks while in the hotel, making the hotel's profits quite good.

But these mercenaries were mostly quite rowdy, they drink while blabbering their mouths, take huge chunks of meat per bite. And

adding on to the fact that it was the end of the day, and they had nothing else to do, they would congregate inside the hotel's dining hall.

Zhao Hai was acting as a Nobleman. When looking at his clothes, one would think of those young masters. Their appearance was quite unusual inside the hotel, there were no such young masters willing to stay at these kinds of establishments. Especially in hotels where mercenaries were staying.

Thus, when Zhao Hai and the others entered the dining hall, everyone immediately quieted down. They looked at Zhao Hai, and when they saw Laura's eyes, their gazes immediately turned green.

Zhao Hai looked at the mercenaries then had Laura and the others sit down. They ordered a bunch of dishes for the hotel staff to prepare. At this time, the mercenaries resumed their ruckus, returning the hall's atmosphere to the bustling scene it was before.

But Zhao Hai felt that these mercenaries were paying attention to them, making him feel uncomfortable. At this time, a drunk stood up from their table and drunkenly headed towards Zhao Hai's. He reached out his hand towards Laura's veil and said, "Beautiful Young Lady, why must you hide your face? Come show me, there's nothing good about that boy, why don't you come with me?"

How could Laura possibly allow the man to touch her? She immediately moved to the side but she didn't think that the drunk would have fast hands. Although she reacted quickly, the hand already reached her.

Naturally, this action cannot be ignored, so Shue who was sitting close by immediately took his axe and immediately chopped towards the mercenary's hand.

The mercenary was fast, he immediately dodged the huge ax. As he fell to the ground, he loudly shouted, "Murder! Murder! These nobles wants to kill me!". After he shouted, the mercenaries inside the dining hall immediately stood up one by one, took their

weapons, and surrounded Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai immediately understood that these weren't ordinary mercenaries. They were prepared and was specifically targeting him.

Zhao Hai sat there and gazed at the surrounding mercenaries and coldly said, "All 6th and 7th rank experts. How could there be these many mercenaries at this place?"

Shun and Shue also just realized, there were about a hundred mercenaries here, it was very unusual to have 6th and 7th ranks but not a single 5th rank or below among them.

Shue went to Zhao Hai's side, Laura and the others also did the same. The 'drunk' mercenary now stood up and yelled to Zhao Hai, "Even if you are Nobles, it doesn't mean that you can just kill anyone you like! Fortunately, this grandfather was fast, otherwise I'd have left my arm here. Pretty boy, you need to offer this grandpa some explanation!"

Zhao Hai looked at the person and said, "Evoking such huge ruckus, So if I provide an explanation, everything will be alright? What kind of explanation do you want?"

Zhao Hai turned his head to Shun and said, "Shun, go see Ruyen and see if she already ate."

Upon hearing Zhao Hai, the mercenary's face changed. They didn't expect Zhao Hai to be this meticulous, even thinking about this point.

Just like what Zhao Hai thought, these mercenaries had two parts of their plan. They need to keep Zhao Hai here, and have another team capture Ruyen. As long as they have Ruyen as their hostage, Zhao Hai wouldn't have the guts to retaliate.

However, they didn't think that Zhao Hai would make Shun go to see Ruyen. The mercenaries now hope that their companions have accomplished their part.

Still, they need to give their companions time. So the mercenary, upon seeing that Shun was getting ready to leave, immediately commanded, “Brothers, we cannot let him leave!” Then the mercenary took his weapon and attacked Zhao Hai.

The man’s weapon was a short handled broad axe. In a small place such as this dining hall, this was the most suitable weapon. But when he moved, Shun immediately threw his hidden weapons while Shue produced shadows to surround the group.

To the two, Zhao Hai’s security was the most important. As for Ruyen? Did she have any significance to them?

Zhao Hai just stood there quietly looking at the mercenaries. But in his mind, he was in contact with Cai’er. He wanted to have Cai’er see Ruyen’s situation.

The information he received made him startled. Ruyen was already captured by the mercenaries. All of her escort guards were killed. Only Ruyen, Jill, and the two maids were kept alive. The mercenary’s methods were quite ruthless. Zhao Hai’s expression sank, it seems like this group was not simple. They weren’t stingy in their methods of attaining their goals. Such people were very hard to deal with.

Chapter 344 – Keeping Count

But Zhao Hai didn't go and save Ruyen right away. He didn't want to expose his true capabilities this early. These people wanted to use Ruyen to threaten him, so she shouldn't be in immediate danger.

The attacks of the mercenaries were very fierce, moreover you can see that they coordinate with each other pretty well. What's more important is that from their movements it seems like they were true mercenaries, not disguised soldiers.

Regular soldiers and mercenaries were on two different sides. Soldiers generally fight in a battlefield during wars, so their combat methods were very specific. They generally would use their weapons to kill the enemy as soon as possible.

Mercenaries were somewhat different. The enemies mercenaries meet were most often not other humans, therefore they would use all means to deal with the enemy. And even if they couldn't kill them, they would at most wound them heavily.

Zhao Hai looked at the situation in front of him and couldn't help but feel anxious. He didn't want to get tangled with these mercenaries for a long time, so he and Meg immediately began to attack with magic.

This time, Zhao Hai decided to use wind element magic. Wind spells were quick, and was very effective inside a small space like this. Meg also happens to be a wind element mage, so naturally she would use spells of this element. Since Shun couldn't go out and see Ruyen, he decided to fight as well.

At this moment, Zhao Hai also came to know how fierce Shun was. Just like what Shue said, Shun really lived up to his name of Eight-Armed Demon. One after another, an uncountable number of hidden weapons were thrown out. And these hidden weapons were doused in poison, giving these mercenaries a lot of

difficulties.

With the help of Zhao Hai and Meg's magic, these mercenaries slowly got taken out one after another. When the 'drunk' mercenary saw this, he immediately called out, "Retreat!". Then he ran away along with the other men.

In a blink of an eye, all the mercenaries in the dining hall vanished. There was nothing else left but shattered chairs and tables as well as Shun's hidden weapons lain across the ground.

At this time, the manager who was hiding behind a door approached while trembling, he looked at the situation at the dining hall. He stared at the dining hall blankly and went to see Ruyen's situation. Zhao Hai stopped him and said, "No need to see them. The guards are gone, all of them are dead. Go tidy up here, don't worry I'll compensate you for the damages done. Also, please remember to bury the guards. I'll pay you later."

The man's expression turned better when he heard Zhao Hai's words. He immediately nodded and began to clean the hall, but before he could do so, Shun stopped him. He first needed to retrieve all of his hidden weapons, otherwise the manager and his attendants would get unnecessarily injured.

It was the first time that Zhao Hai saw Shun retrieving his hidden weapons. He became curious when he saw Shun take out a few stones and placed them all on the ground a few steps away from each other. Then those hidden weapons were immediately collected and stored.

Zhao Hai understood what Shun was doing, The stones that Shun used were certainly magnetized, therefore he could easily collect his hidden weapons. Moreover, Zhao Hai also noted the unnoticeable gloves that Shun wore which were tight fitted to his hands.

It was only noticed this time when Shun was retrieving the weapons. No wonder Shun didn't get affected by his own poisons,

it turns out that it was because of this glove.

After his task, Shun wasn't asked by Zhao Hai to help tidy the place up. Then the group immediately went to their rooms. Zhao Hai also asked the manager to deliver their ordered dishes to their room as he gave a hefty tip, making the manager very happy,

Zhao Hai looked at the escort guards who were killed. Their injuries were very simple, it looked like they were killed without resistance. They were all killed with a single slash, it also seemed that they were eating when they were ended.

Looking at the situation, Shun paused for a moment before he said, "Young Master, they seemed to be poisoned before they were killed."

Shue nodded and said, "Killing all these guards with a single slash isn't a simple thing to do."

Zhao Hai also nodded, then he turned his head to Shun and said, "Go and see whether what they ate was poisoned."

Shun agreed and took a quick look at the dishes that were still present. Then after a while he shook his head and said, "Young master, the food was not poisoned. It should have been administered through other means. The poison used was something that could knock them out for a short period of time. It may be because of this short time that the mercenaries chose to kill all of them."

Zhao Hai nodded, then he asked Cai'er about Ruyen's situation. But Cai'er told him that the mercenaries have already left the monitoring range. This made Zhao Hai quite disappointed.

After the group returned to their suite, Laura asked Zhao Hai with a calm face, "Brother Hai, do you think Grand Duke Lionheart may have a hand in this?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "Definitely, we didn't have any enmity with any other person inside Rosen Empire. So it could only be Grand

Duke Lionheart. I just didn't expect him to resort to such methods."

Shue seriously responded, "Young Master, this is not strange. Grand Dukes tend to control a few mercenary groups. Even though these groups do ordinary mercenary work, when tasked with a certain order, they would immediately execute it. The group this time seems to belong to Grand Duke Lionheart."

Zhao Hai nodded, at this time it was Meg who worryingly said, "Young Master, we should go look for young lady Ruyen, for her to fall to their hands, who knows when an accident might happen."

Zhao Hai felt that what she said made sense, so he immediately had a Blood Hawk carry the Ghost Staff and go search for Ruyen. The city wasn't that big, if they couldn't find Ruyen then the mercenaries could only have gone out of town.

The hawk flew out the city and followed the road towards Carson City. Zhao Hai believed that the mercenaries would certainly bring Ruyen to Carson City, Moreover, they had quite a few wounded among them so they should be moving slowly.

What Zhao Hai didn't expect was the amount of preparation that went to this operation. The mercenaries have already prepared ten large carriages to carry them and were fast approaching Carson City's direction. Zhao Hai immediately had Laura and the others enter the Space as he went towards the Ghost Staff's location. He appeared in front of the mercenaries' route, then waited for them.

The mercenaries also knew that the task was quite hard, so they decided that the faster they could move, the soon they would be able to ask for reinforcements.

As they were hurrying along, the road in front was suddenly blocked by two giant Stone Golems. The two were taller than seven meters, and completely blocked the whole width of the road, giving the mercenary convoy quite a bit of pressure.

When the mercenaries saw the two golems, they knew that Zhao Hai had certainly come. They already received Intel about Zhao Hai so they knew that their opponent was a tri-element mage. The convoy immediately stopped as some men fetched Ruyen to come over.

The mercenary who tried to touch Laura's face back then looked at Zhao Hai who was standing behind the stone golems and said, "Wales, be obedient and stay put, otherwise don't blame me for being impolite. Do you know who this is? It's Purcell Family's young lady, being a man of the Purcell Duchy, if something happened to the young lady, what would you do?"

Zhao Hai looked at the mercenary and showed a faint smile, "It seems like you really looked into my affairs. But did you find out that I don't have any relatives inside Purcell Duchy? This time, I came to Rosen Empire in order to settle here and not go back to Purcell Duchy. Even if you kill the young lady, it wouldn't have anything to do with me. Purcell Duchy is only a mere territory, it couldn't reach its arms toward Rosen Empire. And now you're using the Duchy's young lady to threaten me? You're being too laughable."

The mercenary's complexion sank. He didn't think Zhao Hai to be so uncaring about Ruyen's life and death. The mercenary also didn't know whether Zhao Hai's words were true or not. So he immediately retorted, "You're just deceiving me, come with us without a fight, or else I'll kill them right now."

Zhao Hai calmly replied, "Go on, kill them, I won't block you. These past few days, the young lady had been quite bothersome anyway. If you kill her, I would be relieved. But since I still have an obligation to the Purcell Duchy's Grand Duke, if you kill her, then it wouldn't have been good for my reputation to break my commitment with the Purcell Grand Duke. So I won't forgive the people who made me break my promise, thus you have to die. Not only would I kill you, I will look for a Dark Mage and turn you into

an Advanced Undead to ask about all of you people's families. Then I would have the fates of your families compensate for my loss."

Upon hearing Zhao Hai's words, the mercenaries couldn't help but shiver. They didn't expect such words to come out of Zhao Hai's mouth. But they didn't doubt him, there were some people who would actually do those things, and they never wanted to cross those people. Such people were the least likely persons that the mercenaries would offend, because such people were much more devious than mercenaries.

The mercenaries looked at each other, they knew that using a hostage wasn't enough to deal with Zhao Hai. What they didn't know was at this time, Zhao Hai suddenly made his move. Four vines appeared under Ruyen and attacked the mercenary holding her. The mercenary fell to the ground letting go of Ruyen.

When the other mercenaries managed to respond, Ruyen's body was already wrapped by the vines. When the mercenaries rushed in, the Stone Golems also attacked. At the same time, Zhao Hai's magic fell on the opposing group. The mercenaries had no chance to escape and was immediately killed by the spells. Then Zhao Hai waved his hand as the ground below the four captives fluctuated, dragging their bodies underground.

As the other mercenaries were absent-minded, Zhao Hai immediately executed his plans, first he had Cai'er attack the mercenaries with vines then had Ruyan and the others dragged underground using earth element magic with little to no injuries.

Regarding the hundred or so mercenaries, Zhao Hai turned them into undead. With what these mercenaries did, killing them would be too cheap of a punishment, so he turned them into his eternal servants.

After killing the mercenaries, Zhao Hai didn't care about their carriages and instead went straight back to the hotel and then

placed Ruyen and the others to their rooms.

Ruyen's group suffered the same fate as her escort guards, poisoned to faint. And since the other three were of some status, the mercenaries didn't kill them but instead had them captured too.

Just as Zhao Hai's group returned to their rooms, a knock could be heard from the door. Shue immediately went and prepared his axe as he asked, "Who is it?"

Outside, the manager's voice could be heard speaking. "Guest, were here to deliver your meals to you. It has already been prepared."

Shue looked at Zhao Hai, Zhao Hai nodded. Then Shue opened the door for the manager. The manager bowed to Shue and walked in, behind him were a group of people lifting tables, chairs and also some dining cars with covered dishes on them.

The people immediately went busy as they entered the room. Looking at their movements, it seemed like they very well trained, they moved like clockwork. They place the tables and chairs, arranged the tablewares then the dishes. When they were finished, Zhao Hai had Shue give them a tip, then the group sat down to have their meals.

Zhao Hai looked at the people at the table and said, "Let's eat, just wanting to eat isn't easy nowadays, there would always be some bothersome things happening."

Laura and the others smiled, to be honest, they were already expecting an attack. But they didn't think that the enemy would go too far as to kill the escort guards.

Because of this, the group seemed quite sad. Zhao Hai also saw this, so he cracked a few jokes and after a few moments, the mood became very cheerful.

Just as Zhao Hai had forked some vegetables to his mouth, the

Space prompted, “Toxic substances have entered the host. Weak toxin, can make people faint for a short time. Host is already immune to such toxins due to long-term consumption of space water. No need for detoxification.”

Zhao Hai was surprised then his expression sank. He looked up and said, “Stop! Don’t eat anything. These things are poisoned. It seems like there’s some problem with this hotel.”

Laura and the others froze, they didn’t think that even the hotel was a problem. The group immediately placed their utensils down. Laura looked confused at Zhao Hai, “How can this hotel also be trouble? Even if Grand Duke Lionheart knew that we would be staying at this city, he certainly wouldn’t be able to know that we would stay at this hotel. What’s happening?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, “It seems like we underestimated Grand Duke Lionheart’s strength. Our attention had totally been consumed by those mercenaries.”

Shue nodded, “It seems to be like this. The mercenaries attracted our attention so we didn’t consider the hotel staff to be any threat. Ruyen’s group might have drunk the hotel’s poisoned water. While we checked the food as well as the tea and wine when we first came here. It seems like an insider managed to swap these beverages with poisoned ones.”

Chapter 345 – Intent to Incriminate

Zhao Hai nodded, “This is Rosen Empire, and Lionheart is the empire’s First Lord of the Treasury, completely in command of money. There should be a lot of nobles who want to flatter him inside the empire. So these nobles would certainly want to deal with us. We really did underestimate Lionheart’s influence”

Shue said, “What does young master want to do? Kill them?”

Zhao Hai shook his head, “We can’t. I suspect the other party has a backer to support them. Think about it, if we kill them, then the city lord would surely send some troops and catch us. We cannot just kill anybody here, this is not Aksu Empire, using the nation’s power would be disadvantageous to us. Anyway, let’s just leave these dishes and head back to the Space. I want to see who would come and enter the room to check on us.”

Shue understood that they didn’t have any authority inside Rosen Empire. This set-up made it as though their hands and feet were tied. Rosen Empire was different than Aksu Empire. If you were a foreigner inside Aksu Empire, you would just be treated normally. But a foreigner inside Rosen Empire was basically looked down on. Putting it in the words of Zhao Hai’s earth, it was discrimination.

After interacting with various Rosen Empire citizens these past few days, Zhao Hai’s belief on this solidified even more. Even if he held a viscount status in Aksu Empire, it was useless inside Rosen Empire.

Shue and the others agreed, so while they left their meals on the table, they went to the Space with Zhao Hai. Ruyen was also brought into the Space, but Zhao Hai had Cai’er continually administer some toxic gas towards them to keep them unconscious.

The group was sitting inside the Space and looking at their

room's situation. After about an hour, a knock could be heard from the door as a manager's voice was heard, "Guests, were here to tidy up the tableware."

Naturally, there was no response since there wasn't anybody left in the room. The manager asked for a few more times, but after seeing that there really wasn't any response, the manager said, "Good, now go get them." Then some sounds came from the door as it was opened from the outside.

When the manager saw the scene after he opened the door, he froze. The plates were neatly laid out on the table, while the dishes were returned to their containers. There was no leaves left on the plates to see, and like the plates, there was nobody inside the room either.

The other people who were with the manager were also shocked. Then they immediately searched the room but to their dismay, they didn't see anyone. This made the manager fluster, so they immediately went to find the boss. Before long, the boss ran outside and asked a few guys to check for Zhao Hai's carriage and see whether it was still there.

Zhao Hai's carriage was still there, but their owners had disappeared. Just after delivering the dishes, there were guys assigned to keep watch on the room and they didn't notice anybody going out. But the people inside the room still mysteriously disappeared, missing.

From this situation, they immediately had the City Mage come and investigate. However, the mage couldn't find any magical fluctuations inside the room. The inhabitants really did vanish into thin air.

The people in the hotel panicked and immediately reported the situation to the city lord. But after getting busy for the whole night, they still didn't get any result. In the middle of the night, they felt that the room was very creepy so they left.

They didn't know that the whole spectacle was seen by Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai felt like he was watching monkey drama, seeing them getting busy inside the room but retreated with impatience.

Laura looked at the monitor and turned to Zhao Hai, "Brother Hai was right. The city lord did have a hand in the operation. Otherwise, how could the city's defense force arrive so quickly? It seems like they were paying attention to us."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "Looks like they really wanted to deal with us using official means. Now we must be even more careful."

Laura frowned, "To use official means to deal with us will be difficult to do. We're currently inside Rosen Empire after all."

Zhao Hai turned his head to look outside the window. He sighed and said, "Looks like we can only bring the young lady to Sky Water City with us. If we bring her to Carson City, then she'll surely be killed."

Laura nodded, then sighed as she said, "This young lady will certainly be beset with disasters, it seems like she could only travel with us."

Zhao Hai frowned, "It's no problem if she follows us, but it's just very inconvenient. She's really causing us so much headache."

Laura smiled bitterly, she didn't know what to reply. The group talked about other matters, and when they saw that the sky was getting late they had Stonehead keep watch on the monitor as the rest went to sleep.

The next morning, Zhao Hai and the others had their breakfast inside the Space. When they looked at the monitor and sees that there was nobody there, the group immediately went out of the Space and returned to the hotel.

The manager didn't clean up, but Zhao Hai just looked around the room as he said, "Go wake the young lady. We'll be going out."

Meg nodded as she patted Ruyen's and the other's faces while

calling out their names. Not knowing what just happened, Ruyen and the others groaned while slowly opening their eyes.

Upon opening her eyes and seeing Zhao Hai at the side, Ruyen cannot help but freeze. Then she looked Zhao Hai and said, “Why are you in my room? Who made you come in?”

Zhao Hai frowned, then he turned to Laura and said, “Explain everything to her.”

Laura complied, then she explained to Ruyen the current situation. Ruyen also somewhat recovered and discovered that she was not insider her original room.

Jill and the other two also woke up, they didn’t say anything and just listened to Laura. They also immediately understood the current situation.

When they heard that all of Ruyen’s guards were killed, the four people’s face couldn’t help but turn pale. They didn’t think that they would reach this kind of situation.

Until the time Laura finished speaking, the group’s face were very pale. They didn’t think that such number of lives were lost while they were asleep.

Zhao Hai looked at Ruyen and said, “Young lady, you now have two choices. First, you can follow us. Second, we will deliver you to the nearest large city and Shelley Hotel. They will guarantee your safety while I deliver a letter to the Grand Duke to request for your pick-up Then you can go home. So, would you rather follow us? Or wait for the Grand Duke to fetch you?”

Zhao Hai preferred the latter choice of leaving Ruyen inside Shelley Hotel then go informing Evan to fetch her. This would mean that his troubles would be reduced by one.

Hearing what Zhao Hai said, Ruyen stared for a moment before saying, “I want to go to the hotel, then go home.”

Ruyen herself didn’t want to travel far away. Now with the

current situation, it was very certain that she wouldn't want to travel with Zhao Hai. She knew that if she manage to annoy Zhao Hai, she would be in immediate danger.

Hearing her decision, Zhao Hai's heart relaxed. He really also feared Ruyen travelling with him.

However, before Evan sends for her return, he still had to take care of her for some time. He thought for a moment before he nodded, "Good, let's wait until the next large city, then we'll have you stay inside a Shelley Hotel there. From there, I would send a letter to Grand Duke Evan, and after receiving his reply I would leave."

Ruyen nodded and didn't say anything more. Zhao Hai looked at the time and said, "Good, let's go." The Shue opened the door to allow them to exit.

When the group reached the door, they managed to see the manager who came from cleaning the room downstairs. Looking at the group coming out of the room, the broom on his hand fell down, then stared blankly at Zhao Hai and the others.

Zhao Hai looked at the manager and said with a faint smile, "Manager, I must thank your services. Last night was very satisfying. Shue, give the manager a gift."

Shue complied and then gave a gold coin to the stunned manager. The manager was still gawking thus making the gold coin slip through his hand, landing on the ground and making a clear sound which awakened him. The man looked at Zhao Hai's group as though he just saw a group of ghosts. After staring at Zhao Hai for a long time, the manager screamed loudly and ran downstairs. He didn't even have the chance to get the gold coin on the ground.

Looking at the manager's reaction, the group couldn't help but laugh. They quickly walked and headed downstairs. When they reached the first floor lobby, they saw the people of the hotel looking very alarmed as they looked at the soldiers standing

outside.

Zhao Hai looked at the battle formation and said, “Boss, checkout”

The thin boss told Zhao Hai, “Mister guest, there are a few soldiers looking for you outside.”

Zhao Hai looked at the boss’ eyes coldly and said, “Really? Then have them come in.” Actually, Zhao Hai didn’t need to request it since at this time a helmet-wearing heavy armor infantry walked in from outside. The man was so heavily armored that his face could hardly be seen.

Zhao Hai stared at the eyes underneath the armor and said, “I don’t know what mister officer is looking to me for?”

The armored man said, “You were attacked by mercenaries yesterday?”

Zhao Hai nodded and said, “The people from the hotel can testify. We were attacked by mercenaries yesterday, the escort guards that we brought all died on their hands.”

The armored man replied, “Admitting is good. Now come with me. We suspected that you killed those mercenaries, thus breaking imperial law.”

Chapter 346 – Lionheart's Hidden Issues

Zhao Hai frowned as he responded, "Captain, I am a victim. Ninety of our escort guards were killed, and those mercenaries ran away. How can you say that I killed them in retaliation?"

The Heavily Armored man coldly snorted and said, "Don't waste your breath, some people already seen that the mercenaries were killed. I suspect that you have killed them, now come with me."

Zhao Hai looked at the man coldly, "Captain, I think that you don't know what you're doing. I'm a noble of the continent, a recognized noble of the continent. You have no right to place unwarranted suspicions on me. Now get the hell out, or else I won't be polite with you."

The Armored man's gaze also turned cold, "So you don't intent to cooperate, then don't blame me for being..." Before he even finished his words, Zhao Hai already sent a fireball down his way. Zhao Hai looked at the soldier as he said, "Wasting too much time talking, I might as well take the first step. Shue go kill them." Shue immediately transformed into multiple shadows and charged towards the group of soldiers outside the hotel.

The soldiers of the Heavy Armor unit didn't think that Zhao Hai would take the first action so they weren't prepared. In fact, these soldiers weren't suited to clashes inside cities. With their heavy armors, moving became very inconvenient. If they needed to chase a person, they wouldn't be able to catch up.

If these Heavy infantry were used in a battlefield, then they would become impenetrable walls, even able to withstand a cavalry charge. But their mobility isn't something they could brag about.

The man who spoke with Zhao Hai was immediately killed by the fireball. Shue transformed into a thousand shadows almost instantaneously and appeared right by the heavy armored soldiers.

The soldiers wanted to dodge but their armor became a hindrance to their movements, this made Shue's killing spree very easy.

It may be possible that the city lord knew that fighting would happen here because he imposed martial law on the few blocks nearby, making the residents stay inside their homes so no one could see the battle. Zhao Hai let Shue deal with the soldiers while Shun targeted the people at the hotel.

Yesterday, they wanted to deal with Zhao Hai so naturally nobody inside the hotel was spared. The other people who were in the hotel were those mercenaries, and after the failure of their operation they withdrew. So there was no other guests in the store other than the attendants and the hotel's boss, who tried escaping.

When Shun managed to finish the boss, Shue was also done with the heavy infantry. Zhao Hai immediately waved his hand and turned all of the soldiers into undead. Then he made Shun prepare the carriage so they could get out of the city fast.

The entire event was witnessed by Ruyen. She was afraid of the thousand or so heavy infantry, as well as the other people inside the hotel. But these 1,000 people were actually killed by Zhao Hai, the shock she received was too large.

The city was very small, so they quickly managed to get outside. The first to come out was Zhao Hai's convoy followed by a single carriage which belonged to Ruyen and driven by Jill.

Zhao Hai didn't say anything to them. Instead, he turned to Shue and said, "Shue, since Ruyen doesn't need to head to Carson City anymore, go change directions and go straight towards Sky Water City."

Shue complied and took a detour. Carson City was Lionheart's playground, if Zhao Hai's group goes to Carson City, they would undoubtedly enter into the lion's den. Zhao Hai couldn't possibly allow that.

He initially thought that Lionheart would respect Ruyen's status and wouldn't touch her. Ruyen was a Grand Duke's daughter, but Zhao Hai didn't expect Lionheart to not care about that fact and immediately made plans involving the young lady. In this case, if Zhao Hai made Ruyen go to Carson City, then he would only be sending her to her death.

Zhao Hai also knew that as long as they were inside Rosen Empire, it was impossible to hide their whereabouts. So he didn't conceal his movements, but he still didn't stay inside any cities and always stayed outside to rest.

On the following days, Zhao Hai's group always took a rest outdoors. It was quite normal inside Rosen Empire to stay outdoors like they did. So to the average person, what Zhao Hai's group were doing wasn't strange.

But Zhao Hai's situation was quite special. Almost every night, some people would go and attack them. Sometimes they were mercenaries, sometimes they were a city's garrison. There was no time for them to stay for a long time.

Zhao Hai became used to this. When they were moving inside their carriages during the, they would sleep. In the evening, they would be fighting against the attackers. Everywhere they go they would get attacked, further terrifying Ruyen.

This routine of travelling and killing went on for seven days, but they still didn't manage to find a city with a Shelly Hotel in it. Moreover, during this seven days, Zhao Hai had managed to surprisingly kill 5,000 people.

Looking at the amount of undead Zhao Hai had amassed, Ruyen felt her hairs stiffen. To her Zhao Hai's name became synonymous with the devil.

Zhao Hai also became very impatient. He didn't dare enter a city in order for Lionheart to be unable to use official means to deal with them. He didn't want to face against the judicial system of

Rosen Empire. If that happens, they wouldn't fare well.

Now that Zhao Hai was targeted by Lionheart, the other City Lords also got involved. The Rosen Empire didn't issue a proper command, this matter was very beneficial to Zhao Hai.

As long as he wasn't issued an arresting order, he will not become an enemy of the whole Rosen Empire. Even if the Grand Duke was powerful and influential, he also had enemies. For him to crazily pursue Zhao Hai was nothing but making a statement. He wants other people who wanted his power to know that it wasn't easy to mess with him.

But Grand Duke Lionheart didn't expect even in his dreams that Zhao Hai would become a hard bone to chew. He sent a lot of people as well as have the city lords help him but he still couldn't eliminate Zhao Hai. Now Zhao Hai has become a thorn on his side, as long as Zhao Hai lived, Grand Duke Lionheart wouldn't be able to rest well. The other people around him looked at him with ridiculing looks for being unable to deal with a single person.

Grand Duke Lionheart had been favored these past few years. This made him arrogant, walking around impudently, and offending a lot of people. These people were looking forward to the day the Grand Duke would make a fool of himself.

The Grand Duke also had another slight issue, which was Rosen Empire's Emperor. He and the Emperor were good friends even before the Emperor became crowned. Moreover, the Emperor being crowned had a lot to do with Lionheart. Without his help, the Emperor possibly couldn't have a smooth coronation.

Because of this, after the Emperor had ascended to the throne, he gave Lionheart his extreme favor and trust, giving him the lucrative position of First Lord of the Treasury. Because of this backing, Lionheart became more and more arrogant and overbearing as time passed by.

This was where Lionheart forgot something. He forgot that he

was only an official, while the Emperor was the sole master of the nation. No matter whether he helped the Emperor ascend to his throne, was his best friend, say good things to him, but if Lionheart begins to threaten the crown's position, the Emperor wouldn't be polite.

This time, when Lionheart was going after Zhao Hai, he only released a message but there were a lot of city lords who answered. It showed how much influence he had. And the greater influence he had, the more the Emperor was dissatisfied with him. This point didn't strike Lionheart, since he was fully absorbed in dealing with Zhao Hai.

However, the Grand Duke's enemies wouldn't let go of this opportunity. From time to time, these people would report Lionheart's activities to the emperor. At the same time, they also reported about his attitude. Although these points eventually convinced the Emperor, he stood back and didn't reprimand Lionheart. But these people already knew that the Emperor now placed his sights on Lionheart.

Zhao Hai naturally didn't know of these. He was still very annoyed by Lionhearts daily attacks. These days, the attacks had become more and more fierce. This gave Zhao Hai a very difficult time because it was impossible for him to release hundreds of thousands of undead inside Rosen Empire. If he really did that, it would make the Rosen Empire issue an order to chase him.

Zhao Hai was resting outside tonight and waited for Lionheart's attack. He sat outside his tent and ate lamb and mutton soup. Since it was still winter, such food was the best. It was delicious, warm and can stave of hunger.

At this time, Zhao Hai turned to Shun and said, "Shun, go over to Ruyen and invite her here. Tell her that I have a matter to discuss with her." Shun complied and headed towards Ruyen's tent.

These days, Ruyen was extremely behaved. When they go and

rest every night, her group would always stay inside their tent and only come out during dawn, making Zhao Hai unable to see her face.

But Zhao Hai didn't care, Ruyen acting like this was better. He was free of worry and he also didn't like to interact with Ruyen.

Before long, Ruyen's group was seen following Shun and heading towards Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai had a bonfire in front of him, but since it was winter and they were outdoors, it didn't feel warm.

Zhao Hai looked at Ruyen and calmly said, "Young lady, we will pass through River Law City tomorrow. The city is a large-sized city in Rosen Empire so there should be a Shelley Hotel there. We'll rest for a few days inside River Law City while we send a letter to Grand Duke Evan and wait for his reply. Does the young lady have any objections?"

Ruyen shook her head and replied, "I don't, I'll leave every decision to mister. If there's nothing else, Ruyen will head back." Zhao Hai nodded, then Ruyen lead Jill and the maids back to their tent. At this time, hoofbeats could be heard, making Zhao Hai and the others attentive.

Chapter 347 – Shelley Family's Test

Zhao Hai and the others had already gotten used to it these past days. They would even consider it strange if nobody would attack them at night. Therefore when they heard hoofbeats, Zhao Hai immediately opened the monitor to observe the situation.

Before long, a team of cavalry appeared on the monitor. The group numbered about 500 people, but the cavalry weren't heavily armored, they had bows and arrows as well as spears and swords. They look like light cavalry, wearing only leather armor.

But on this group's saddles were several heads of people. This image made Zhao Hai confused. Looking at the state of the heads, it seemed like they were killed not too long ago. What is happening?

After a short while, the cavalry arrived at Zhao Hai's camp. Surprisingly, they didn't attack Zhao Hai but instead they stopped and dismounted from their horses.

A dismounted cavalry was a message of well-meaning. Since people knew that the main attacking prowess of cavalry soldiers was when they were on the backs of their mounts, a dismounted cavalry means that they don't have any intention of attacking.

Zhao Hai was confused as he looked at the cavalry, he didn't know what this group's intentions were. At this time, a cavalryman took a few steps forward and said, "Is the man in front mister Wales?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "It's me. And you are?"

The man immediately replied, "This one is from Shelley Family. I'm light cavalry captain Might responsible for escorting mister. Mister had been attacked these past few days, but since mister suddenly changed course, the family had been slow to react, please forgive me."

Zhao Hai was surprised, he didn't think that Shelley Family would protect him. He quickly responded, "I wouldn't dare. So it turns out to be friends from Shelley Family, please take a seat. Shun, Shue, go prepare some lamb and some mutton soup for these brothers."

Shun and Shue complied and immediately took out several pots from the supply carriage and prepared some food for Might and his team. Seeing that Zhao Hai allowed them to enter their camp, Might relaxed, then he immediately had his subordinates construct several tents outside the camp and have the heads removed from the saddles. Zhao Hai knew without asking that these heads were from those who would've attacked him but were killed by this cavalry group.

Zhao Hai asked Might to sit by the bonfire. He looked at Might and said, "Brother Might, you said that you were ordered by the Shelley Family to protect me, why is that? I may have some milk wine to trade with the family but I don't think that our relationship has gone quite deep."

Zhao Hai knew that there was no point in going around circles when talking to soldiers, so he got straight to the point.

Sure enough, Might immediately answered, "Mister is too polite. Although mister only had some milk wine trades with the family, he has helped us a lot before. Mister once saved the hotel at Hundred Battles Fortress, which made the Grand Duke go after mister. The family felt responsible for the incident so we wanted to send someone to escort mister. But our family had been suppressed by Grand Duke Lionheart for so long, so I was only able to arrive today."

Upon hearing Might, Zhao Hai knew that he managed to reach Shelley Family from his recent actions, making the family send him some guards for protection. This was a good start.

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "This is nothing. We are partners and I

just happened to be there at that time and those people took me as an excuse, so I naturally couldn't just ignore it. I did it not to help the family but to save my reputation."

Might laughed and said, "Mister says this, but the house couldn't help but feel responsible. In any case, this matter was because of us so the family sent us out to escort mister and his group. Let me tell mister about something, this will soon pass."

Zhao Hai stared at Might and said, "Why? Did the family already prepare a counter-attack?"

Might didn't hide the truth from Zhao Hai, with a serious tone he said, "Nobody can suppress Shelley Family and not pay the price. The family is a business family and doesn't generally work with nobles. The family's attention is mainly on making money, but Lionheart had been too much this time, the family couldn't stay back any longer."

Zhao Hai nodded, Shelley Family was one of the pinnacle business families in the continent. Although they weren't as overbearing as the Markey Family, they also wouldn't be polite to those who offend them.

Might looked at Zhao Hai, "The members of the family look highly upon mister. These past few days, Lionheart had been trying to deal with mister but you had managed to stave him off time and time again. This feat attracted our admiration."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "If I don't have such skill, then I wouldn't dare cooperate with the Shelley Family. Also, If I don't have such ability, I wouldn't wade in such turbid waters."

Might felt Zhao Hai's self-confidence and was so amused that he couldn't help but laugh. He smiled at Zhao Hai and said, "Mister is really a frank person. Hahaha, I really like to make friends with people like mister."

Zhao Hai also laughed, "I also like to make friends with people

like you, simple and direct. Being friends with nobles is too tiring. Hahaha”

At this time, Shue had already prepared the mutton soup. These mutton were made from Iron Mountain Fort. Just pour in hot water and wait for a while then you can already eat it. Although it didn't taste as good as fresh mutton, it was quite a delicacy in this kind of weather.

After eating, Might went back to take a rest but not before leaving 50 men to be the night guards. They came this time to protect Zhao Hai so obviously they couldn't make Zhao Hai's men keep watch for the night.

With Might's men keeping watch for the night, Zhao Hai's group naturally slept in extreme comfort. After having their early morning breakfast, Zhao Hai and the others rushed towards River Law City under the protection of Might.

Zhao Hai knew for a fact that Might already knew about their whereabouts and can catch up to them at any time. They simply didn't do so because they want to see Zhao Hai's strength and determine whether Zhao Hai was qualified enough to have the family's support.

The people from Shelley Family knew that protecting Zhao Hai meant that they were willing to further their cooperation with him. For a large family like Shelley's, people who they form connections with must be competent enough, otherwise they wouldn't be able to match the family's status.

After observing these past few days, the Shelley Family deemed Zhao Hai to have enough capability to cooperate with them. Thus, Might appeared.

Zhao Hai didn't sit inside his carriage today, but stood at the bench outside the carriage. Might was right beside him on horseback. Zhao Hai looked at Ruyen's carriage and said to Might, “We'll settle inside River Law City for a few days to recuperate as

well as to solve the young lady's problem. All her escort guards are dead so she couldn't go study at Carson City anymore. So I'm sending a letter to Grand Duke Evan and have him send people to fetch Ruyen here. When I receive the Grand Duke's reply, I'll leave River Law and head to Sky Water City, when that time comes I'll have to trouble you with Ruyen's safety."

Might smiled and said, "Of course, as long as they are guests inside Shelley Hotel, we would certainly guarantee their safety. Not to mention that the City Lord has connections to our Shelley Family. So the security of young lady Ruyen is not a problem."

Zhao Hai nodded, "That's good, so you're saying that River Law city is under Shelley Family's domain? Then we should be safe being there right?"

Might smiled, "Although it couldn't be our domain, River Law city could be considered to be our home. There, nobody could touch us, even if Rosen Empire's Emperor wanted to deal with us, we would have a lot of ways to retreat."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "Good, your words made me feel relieved. Right, if I wanted to head towards Sky Water City, what would be the easiest way to get there?"

Might smiled faintly, "It would be riding a boat. River Law City is just adjacent to Law river, and the river stretches up to Sky Water City, so you can go there through this body of water. Thus, if you want to travel quickly to Sky Water City, travelling by boat would be the most convenient method."

Zhao Hai nodded, "Good, then we'll wait for the boat passing through Law river. Right, you don't need to protect me anymore when I head towards Sky Water City. Also, how much do you know about Sky Water City?"

Might smiled, "Not very much, you should know that Shelley Family's headquarters isn't inside the empire, but the clan had been planning to move here. Although the empire isn't very

likeable, they have one thing right, which was being the at the dead center of the continent. Not only did it place at the center of the continent, its waterways were also very suitable for trade. So the family had always wanted to move the headquarters to Rosen Empire. And Sky Water City was the city that was of the most concern to us. It is a natural harbor, able to dock large sized ships. And from there, you could head directly south towards Ocean Waves Dynasty directly. Towards north, you would be able to reach the Beastman Prairie. One could say the city is Rosen Empire's center of maritime traffic. But the city was under the rule of Calci Family, and Calci Family is one of the oldest nobles of the empire. They hold great power, and Sky Water City is the family's money purse. Nobody else could touch it. Therefore, our forces there could only be small. The other were the same, even the Radiant Church that is everywhere in the continent was very unpopular there."

Zhao Hai nodded, he didn't say anything, and more importantly he couldn't just tell Might that Calci family was basically the League of Dark Mages. For such a clan to allow the Radiant Church to establish a foothold in their own domain would be crazy.

Might turned to Zhao Hai and said, "Why was mister asking? Does Mister want to do business with the Calci Family? That family has always been low-key, only a few people in the continent had managed to cooperate with them. I'm afraid doing business with that family will not be easy."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "I'm just saying this. You should know that I have a business inside the prairie, and Sky water City has a harbor that could be used to head towards the prairie directly. And the tax also wasn't high, therefore I decided to go to that city to do business. Moreover, I also heard that the entirety of Sky Water City is controlled by Calci Family. So if I go there, how could Grand Duke Lionheart be able to touch me?"

Might nodded, "He absolutely wouldn't dare. Everyone inside

Sky Water City reports to Calci Family. As long as you settle there, even if the Rosen Empire's Emperor wanted to catch you, he would still need to go through Calci Family. It was precisely because of this that a lot of merchants gathered in Sky Water City for the protection of Calci Family."

Zhao Hai didn't expect that the Calci Family would have such control over Sky Water City. But it was better for Zhao Hai, with this kind of control, nobody would be able to mess with him.

The group didn't hurry along, but when people on the road see them, they would immediately make way. The cavalry had hung the family flag of Shelley Family. At this time, if someone dared to attack them, they would be offending the family. There wasn't a lot of people in the continent who had such guts. If Shelley Family really put their foot into it, even the Rosen Empire Emperor would need to behave temporarily.

Only a fellow like Grand Duke Lionheart, who did not know about the immensity of heaven and earth, would offend someone like the Shelley Family. Although if you were to mention a merchant family, the first thing to come into people's mind would be Markey Family, it was because the Markey Family was too overbearing and thus left very deep impression on the people in the continent.

However, if someone really understood the intricacies of the continent, Shelley Family was also a powerhouse that couldn't just be offended. Their family being able to open hotels all throughout the continent is a testament to their strength.

The hotel industry was a very profitable business, but for so many years, the Shelley Family had always been the pinnacle of the hotel chain business. Wasn't this fact enough to explain their capabilities?

There were even rumors in the continent that the all-powerful Markey Family once tried dipping their hands in the hotel

business, making them in conflict with the Shelley Family. But in the end, the Markey Family wasn't able to shake Shelley Family's position. This should be quite enough to explain the family's might.

Presently, Zhao Hai was like a small spider, knitting his web network little by little. And when he is done, he would have the strength to revive the Buda Clan.

Obviously, Shelley Family is an indispensable part of this network. With such strong collaborator, Zhao Hai's network will be more robust and be more resistant to getting blown away.

Without stopping, the convoy could already see River Law City when noon came. But there was still a ways to go, although they could see the city's shadow, it would still take them two hours of travel to reach there.

Zhao Hai and the others simply ate inside their carriage and didn't stop. And Might who was beside their carriage just munched on some dry rations and continued on without stopping.

Chapter 348 – River Law City

It was in the afternoon when Zhao Hai's convoy reached River Law City. Not only was River Law City right beside Law river, the water used for its moat was directly sourced from the river itself. They artificially redirected a small portion of water from the river effectively making a branch route for the water to pass through. Because of this, aside from the ordinary city gates, there were also two water gates allowing mid and small sized ships to approach the city.

River Law City was very big, it was a city large enough to support a million residents. In an era where high rise buildings were uncommon, you can imagine how huge such a city was.

Zhao Hai's group entered the city through its west gate. Once they entered, Zhao Hai could feel the peculiarities of this city. First, there were a lot of people walking around, more numerous than other large sized cities back in Aksu Empire. The cities streets were extremely dense with people. If these people didn't wear different clothes, Zhao Hai would have thought that he had returned back to China.

Fortunately there were so many escorts to open the way for them. The pedestrians immediately made way upon seeing their carriages.

Before long, the group arrived at the front door of River Law City's Shelley Hotel. This branch was quite different from other branches. The hotel was very high, Zhao Hai could count more than a dozen floors in the building. Without concrete, it was very difficult to build a structure that high.

As soon as they arrived at the hotel, the attendants inside immediately welcomed them. The attendants knew Might, so they immediately took charge in taking care of the mounts towards the back courtyards.

The same was with Zhao Hai's carriage. Zhao Hai didn't need to worry about it since there was someone who came and took care of their carriage. When the group entered the hotel, the hotel's manager came to greet them. The manager was called Amare, he had a very tall and big stature. If he didn't wear silk made business clothing, Zhao Hai might have mistook him for a warrior.

The manager didn't say any nonsense to Zhao Hai and immediately arranged for their accommodations. The manager gave them the best suites in the hotel and let Zhao Hai and the others rest.

What surprised Zhao Hai was that there was an elevator inside the hotel that looked like it ran on electricity. But upon closer inspection, it was in fact powered by magic. Zhao Hai wasn't the only one surprised, Laura was also quite shocked.

One must know that the energy used by such an elevator wasn't free. One could imagine the upkeep costs of such a contraption. Aside from Shelley hotel, no other place would dare install such a thing.

The biggest difference between River Law City's Shelley hotel and other places was that there were so many guests here, so business was extremely booming. Here, well-dressed nobility who wore silk clothing wasn't uncommon. Merchants who wore the same level of quality clothes were also present, further showing the exquisiteness of the hotel.

When the other guest saw Zhao Hai, they didn't care too much. Zhao Hai was walking together with Might so they just thought that he was someone from the Shelley Family.

After settling in the hotel, Zhao Hai immediately released a blood hawk to send a letter to Evan. The reason that he didn't send a hawk before was that he didn't know whether they would be able to stay at a single place for a long time. But now that they were inside River Law City, he was now able to send his letter, telling

Evan to fetch Ruyen.

Zhao Hai didn't make Shun ride the hawk. The last time was only used to test the hawk's capabilities. This time, such method was unnecessary, moreover, it was currently winter so with the hawk's speed and latitude, the rider would be frozen cold.

Evan's reply came in quick that very night. Evan didn't have Ruyen stay inside River Law City, but he requested Zhao Hai to take her to Sky Water City where he would send a ship to go pick Ruyen up.

This made Zhao Hai surprised, but when it came to mind that Ruyen wasn't a good companion to travel with, Zhao Hai immediately felt a headache.

Ruyen had previously given him trouble back at Iksa Domain. Now that she was behaved, she was extremely behaved, making Zhao Hai doubt deep inside.

The next morning, when Zhao Hai and the others had their breakfast he told Ruyen about Evan's plan for her. Then Zhao Hai asked Might to help them arrange a ship to ride on. Such matter was extremely easy to do for someone like Might. But even then, they couldn't leave today, it has to be the next day.

Zhao Hai didn't mind. Although there were vessels headed for Sky Water City, they couldn't just board one. There were ships which were very attractive for pirates, so just picking any ship wasn't a wise thing to do.

Although Zhao Hai wasn't afraid of them, Might couldn't just allow that to happen. Zhao Hai requested him to prepare a ship for them, so if their ship were to get attacked by pirates, it would be ugly for his reputation.

Since they were going to stay inside River Law City for another day, Zhao Hai didn't just hide inside his hotel room. He went for a stroll around the city while at the same time buying a lot of things,

majority of them were some items people from the prairie would need.

What do people in the prairie need the most? First was grain. Second was salt. And third was iron!

Grain, needless to say, was what the prairie lacked the most, followed by salt. As much as the beastmen liked consuming salt, their appetite for iron was just the same. One must know that there was absolutely no way to procure iron from the grasslands, so all the ironworks inside the prairie were most likely brought in from human territory.

But among humans, these three were not that urgently needed. And since Zhao Hai already produces food and grain by himself every single day, he only bought salt and iron as well as other miscellaneous living commodities.

Since he stayed inside the prairie for quite some time, he already knew what people from that place needed the most. And with Laura's help, Zhao Hai didn't worry that he might buy something that was useless.

Regarding Zhao Hai's actions, Might didn't say anything. This was what a businessman would most likely do anyway. If a merchant only thinks of fighting and not make any money, then what kind of merchant would that be?

The next day, Zhao Hai and the others ate their breakfast and prepared to leave. Right outside the city's docks, there was a ship headed towards Sky Water city that the Shelley Family knew quite well. So the group boarded that ship.

When they arrived at the docks, Zhao Hai was shocked. He really underestimated the city's pier. There were no fewer than a thousand large to small sized vessels docked. The largest of them looks like it could carry a thousand jin worth of cargo, and this was not a small number.

It was fortunate that Law river's surface was very wide, while its depth was also very adequate. Otherwise it wouldn't be able to accommodate such a number of ships. Zhao Hai and the others boarded the largest vessel on the dock. The ship was very large, it could carry a thousand jin of cargo quite easily. The ship had three masts and besides loading cargo, it also accepts passengers onboard.

Might had already arranged rooms not only for Zhao Hai's group, but also for their magic beasts.

This was Zhao Hai's first time riding a boat after he arrived at Ark Continent. He had ridden a boat back on Earth, but that ship was already made of steel, he had not been inside a wooden ship before.

After boarding the ship, Might also introduced Zhao Hai to the ship's captain. The captain was called Stack. He grew a full beard on his face, with a tall and big stature, and due to being aboard the ship for years, he had quite a tanned skin that appeared very robust, he also wore a cold expression. But he was extremely amiable when meeting Zhao Hai, it looks like he already knew Might for a long time.

However, his appearance wasn't what attracted Zhao Hai's attention. Upon observing the main, Zhao Hai noticed that he was actually a 7th rank Warrior.

Zhao Hai also paid attention to the crew on board. Their bodies weren't weak, and while they wore weapons, they also operated the several ballistas mounted on the ship.

Zhao Hai actually forgot that these ships needed to be able to protect themselves when they go travelling, so it was very natural for them to be equipped with weapons.

Such was a ship arranged by Might, he couldn't just get a ship that he wasn't confident with. So Zhao Hai also trusted the ship. After obtaining Stack's consent, Zhao Hai explored around the

vessel.

Apart from Zhao Hai, the ship probably had more than a hundred passengers. Some were merchants, while some were civilians that wanted to visit Sky Water City. And the living quarters were clearly divided where the lower decks were the cheaper ones.

After asking around, Zhao Hai found out that the travel from River Law City to Sky Water City will take about 5 days by ship, but if they were to travel in land, it may take about half a month or so.

Law river's surface was wide so there wasn't much swaying of the ship, but nevertheless, Meg developed seasickness. Zhao Hai had no other choice but to have her return to their room and had her sent to the Space.

Laura was well traveled so it was natural that she didn't get seasick. Instead, she was extremely spirited and followed Zhao Hai in exploring the entire ship along with Nier. Ruyen was as usual, being behaved and stayed inside her room and didn't come out.

If it wasn't for Ruyen's previous actions, Zhao Hai might have thought that she had gone crazy. When Zhao Hai was just starting out with their travels, he could see Ruyen almost every day, But now, Ruyen eats all three meals of the day inside her room. When they were inside the carriage, he wouldn't be able to see her. Even when they stay inside their tents back when they were travelling, Ruyen would still stay inside. She seems to be hiding from Zhao Hai.

These days Zhao Hai had already gotten used to her. But he was still somewhat worried, he's afraid that Ruyen had developed some sort of sickness. If this was so, he wouldn't know how to explain himself to Evan.

Evan's initial purpose was to let Ruyen get in contact with Zhao Hai as much as possible. Although Zhao Hai already had Laura and Meg, having more than one wife was quite normal in the

continent. After seeing Zhao Hai's transformation, Evan made his plans. But it seems like his thoughts were wasted, Ruyen didn't get in contact with Zhao Hai often, so how could they discuss getting betrothed with each other?

Chapter 349 – Arrow Turtle

After three days onboard the ship, Zhao Hai didn't experience any discomfort. Instead, he managed to make quite a few friends among the passengers as well as getting more acquainted to Stack.

Zhao Hai wasn't innately a mean spirited person, and adding on to the fact that people who ride ships were generally wine lovers, Zhao Hai naturally supplied his Milk Wine. It was the first time Stack drank such wine, so naturally the captain of the ship was very happy.

The milk wine that Zhao Hai produced wasn't the same as the other low alcohol level wines. He had been able to make a 40% alcohol content wine, one little sip is all you need to taste its potency.

This high alcohol content liquor had never appeared in the continent before and Stack had become one of the first persons who were able to drink this wine, but he managed to get drunk after taking only a few sips. Fortunately, Zhao Hai's wine doesn't give people hangovers, so the captain just slept it off.

Although he already got drunk from such small amount, Stack absolutely loved Zhao Hai's liquor. Its flavor was very satisfying, especially to the drunkard Stack.

But Zhao Hai didn't give him the same type of liquor, but instead he took out another one but had less than the amount of alcohol content in it. Nevertheless, Stack still liked it so he hounded Zhao Hai to purchase more of this kind of wine. Zhao Hai was generous and directly gave Stack 50 jin of wine, allowing Stack's impression of Zhao Hai to skyrocket.

Zhao Hai stood at the top deck of the ship, watching the other vessels come and go. He knew that since the Law river was quite busy, ships would always be visible at all times. It really did seem that this Law river is the busiest river in the entire Rosen Empire.

Laura was standing right by Zhao Hai's side and looked at the scenery, "Brother Hai, how about we get a ship for our use later on?"

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "Right, we'll have to get a ship later so that we can get to the prairie much more easily. We could also use it to go out and experience the vast seas."

Laura smiled, "Good I'm already grown up but I still hadn't been out to the sea yet. I really want to see what it looks like."

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile, "Don't worry, in the future, you'll be able to see it whenever you like. Haha." At this moment, Zhao Hai felt the ship shudder. Zhao Hai immediately thought that something must have gone wrong as the ship's hull shook again.

Seeing that the state of the ship wasn't normal, Stack also ran towards the sides of the boat and looked closely into the water. Although he didn't know what they were looking for, Zhao Hai also looked into the river.

There was a dark shadow underneath the water, just beside the ship. The shadow's head wasn't very small. Zhao Hai looked confused at the dark shadow and asked Stack, "Stack, what is that? Did that collide with the ship?"

Stack nodded, "Right, it did collide with the ship, that is Law river's unique magic beast, an Arrow Turtle. These beasts are notorious here, they're very big, their strength isn't something to scoff at, and their shells are very special. It has a horn about a meter long in front of it that looks like a sword. Besides its shell, it also had tough scales all throughout its body that is very difficult to deal with. Most importantly, this turtle likes to smash itself towards ships, our ship is still safe since it has a thick hull so we don't need to worry in the meantime. But if it keeps ramming itself to the ship, it's possible to make a hole in it. This would be dangerous so we cannot just allow it."

Zhao Hai asked curiously, "What are you planning to do? Shoot it

with harpoons? Is it effective?”

Stack nodded, “We’ll just send in a warning shot, this thing’s quite cowardly. Sometimes it only takes a few shots to make it retreat. But if possible, we’ll catch it, this thing is a delicacy.”

As he was saying that, Stack signalled to his crew to prepare the harpoons as Zhao Hai watched them. These harpoons were very different from the ballista arrows used in the continent. The difference between the ones used here from the one used on land was that the harpoons actually had ropes tied onto them.

Under Stack’s command, the crew quickly loaded the harpoon onto the ballistas as they continuously shot at the shadow, producing massive ripples on the river’s surface. Before long, red blood could be seen appearing on the water as the crew pulled the harpoons back to the ship.

At this time, a sailor shouted, “Captain, the harpoon has hooked on to something, it’s possibly the Arrow Turtle.”

As soon as Stack heard it, he immediately became happy, he replied, “Really? Fantastic! Quickly, everyone, come help pull it onboard.” Then the crew put all of their effort to pull the rope while Zhao Hai and Laura observed at the side.

After a short while, the crew managed to pull the harpoon to the surface. On the tip was an Arrow Turtle hanging from the rope. The Arrow Turtle was just like what Stack said, it was 5 meters long, had a spike on its head that was connected to its shell. Its skin closely resembled those of alligators and looked very thick. But in the end, Stack’s harpoon managed to penetrate the turtle’s foot. Even with the struggles of the Arrow Turtle, it didn’t manage to dislodge itself from the harpoon.

The Arrow Turtle appeared very aggressive, it often opened its mouth to roar, showing Zhao Hai the canines inside its mouth. This was definitely a magic beast capable of strong attacks.

At this time, a sailor was getting another shot ready to kill the turtle. Pulling in onboard while still alive was a very dangerous thing to do since the creature's attacks weren't weak.

Seeing that the sailor was about to shoot the arrow, Zhao Hai quickly intervened, "Wait! Don't shoot! Stack, how about selling this turtle to me?"

Stack stared, "What do you want this for?"

Zhao Hai faintly smiled, "You leave that to me, so are you selling it?" Stack smiled and said, "What sell, I'll give it to you. We just captured it anyway."

Zhao Hai was happy, he didn't become polite as he arrived at the side of the ship and waved his hand immediately sending the Arrow Turtle into the Space. This was a new type of magic beast that may help Zhao Hai upgrade his Ranch. Its wounds didn't matter since the Space could just heal it.

When Stack saw the way Zhao Hai took the turtle away, his complexion changed. Although he was just a ship captain, he also had a lot of experiences. For Zhao Hai to do what he just did showed that he had a spatial item with him. For a person to hold a spatial item, one's status shouldn't be that low. Stack didn't think that Zhao Hai would own such item.

One should know that spatial items were status symbols in the continent. It was normal for Great Noble families to not have one, yet Zhao Hai actually had one, clearly showing his capabilities.

Although Stack wasn't a noble, he had met a lot of nobles before. These past few days that he interacted with Zhao Hai, he saw that Zhao Hai was quite different in a lot of ways. Zhao Hai didn't have the innate arrogance nobles generally had. With all of his interactions with Stack, he didn't show even a least bit of disdain, this made Stack feel touched.

Now seeing Zhao Hai reveal his spatial item, Stack cannot help

but reevaluate his perception of Zhao Hai's status. Stack knew the Shelley Family very well, he frequently helps the family transport their cargo. When he saw Zhao Hai being accompanied with Might, as well as the absence of the Shelley Family emblem on him, Stack thought that Zhao Hai was not a member of Shelley Family. But he didn't expect Zhao Hai to possess a spatial item. This made Stack think that Zhao Hai might have been a direct lineage member of Shelley Family.

Law river's small incident was just a small distraction. Zhao Hai chatted with Stack for a while then returned to his room. He wants to quickly take a look whether the Space levelled up after taking in the Arrow Turtle. He wanted to see what changes the Ranch would undergo when it reaches level 10.

However, it was a pity that the Arrow Turtle wasn't enough to upgrade the Ranch to level 10. It became just like any animal inside the Ranch.

Zhao Hai didn't mind that the Ranch didn't level up. But this incident gave Zhao Hai a new idea. Although there were a lot of animals on land; the rivers, lakes, and seas also had a lot of plants and animals within, possibly even more than those in land. If Zhao Hai can take in some plants and animals from the river, levelling the Space wouldn't be difficult.

Laura who sat near Zhao Hai said, "Brother Hai, how about we directly absorb the river's water? Will that work?"

Zhao Hai froze, he didn't think about that. Directly absorbing the river's water? This method was worth trying.

Zhao Hai nodded, "We'll try, but we must wait for an appropriate opportunity. In two days we'll arrive at Sky Water City. Not only can we absorb Law river's water there, we could also get some seawater as well, this should be enough to upgrade the Space. The Ranch had slowly gotten upgraded recently, but the Farm hadn't levelled up since. When we reach Sky Water City it would be best to

find more unique plants to upgrade the Farm quickly. When we manage to cure the Water of Nothingness, then we can relax.”

Laura agreed, “Right, we really need to upgrade the farm as soon as possible. But it is currently winter, plants aren’t exactly very abundant at this time. Most of them would have wilted by now or in the last months. If we want to get rid of the effects of the Water of Nothingness, I’m afraid we’ll have to wait until spring.”

Zhao Hai nodded, “We can wait, no need to worry about it for now. We have already waited for quite a long time, so there should be no problem waiting longer. Also, when we arrive at Sky Water City, we still need to settle down.”

Laura also nodded and said, “We currently have Might to protect us, but it means that we’re currently identified as members of the family. This might give us problems later on, which I think the Shelley Family depends on to tie us to them. With this, others might think twice when cooperating with us. Brother Hai, do you think that this will affect our cooperation with Calci Family?”

Zhao Hai shook his head, “It shouldn’t, we are people from the League of Dark Mages. Technically, our connection with Calci Family is much closer than with the Shelley Family, so they shouldn’t doubt our intentions.”

Chapter 350 – Insane Level Ups

Laura nodded, “If we can really form a relationship with the Calci Family, then it would certainly be a good thing for us. That way, if we decide to reveal our identity in the future, nobody would dare to say anything.”

Zhao Hai smiled, “If we don’t reveal it then nobody would know. Our territory is in Aksu Empire anyway. If we let people know who we are, then we’ll always get into trouble, and that would be annoying.”

Laura agreed, although Cai’er can make them survive inside the poisonous fog, it wasn’t a complete protection. There were a lot of 9th ranks all throughout the continent, as well as people with divergent abilities. Moreover, they shouldn’t underestimate the strength behind an empire. Right now, not only are they enemies with Aksu Empire, there was also the more formidable Radiant Church.

The Radiant Church’s capabilities are massive. Moreover, Light element magic has qualities that can suppress the poison fog. If the Radiant Church actually came to know Zhao Hai’s identity, they will certainly go to the Black Wasteland, this situation was what Zhao Hai didn’t want to happen.

When Zhao Hai saw that Laura didn’t say anything, he continued, “What’s the situation with your subordinate who went to the prairie?” Zhao Hai was naturally asking about Ah Tai, Laura’s subordinate who was in the prairie.

Originally, Zhao Hai was meant to see Ah Tai when he arrived in the prairie and together they would head towards Beast God City. But because of Wales’ matter, that didn’t happen. However, Laura still instructed Ah Tai to head to Beast God City to act as the advance party.

Laura nodded, “I received info a few days ago, he already arrived

at Beast God City, now he's currently understanding the situation there."

Zhao Hai nodded, "That's good, currently, Brother Wales is our only customer there. But his tribe alone cannot consume all of our grain. We must head to Beast God City later on and hopefully come in contact with those huge Warring Clans. I think that after we have settled in Sky Water City for some time, we'll see if there's a ship headed for the Beastmen Prairie, then we'll board it."

Laura frowned, "I think we should wait until spring arrives before we head back to the prairie. There's no business there at this time, beastmen had already prepared grains to survive the winter, going there would be a waste of time."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "It is exactly because all merchants think that there's no opportunity that we have to go there. Who knows, some special event might happen."

After saying this, Meg suddenly said as she was looking at the monitor, "Young Master, something isn't right. The ship's hull seem to be shaking more and more."

Zhao Hai stared for a moment and then left the Space with Laura. Upon exiting, he could clearly feel the violent shaking of the ship, it felt like the previous Arrow Turtle attack but much more intense.

Zhai Hai immediately arrived at the top deck along with Laura. Stack was stern faced while looking at the river. Zhao Hai quickly went on to his side and saw a lot of Arrow Turtles. These Arrow Turtles seem to ram the ship non-stop.

When he saw the situation, Zhao Hai couldn't help but frown and ask, "Stack, what is all this? Did these Arrow Turtles go crazy?"

Stack shook his head and said, "They're not crazy, but quite similar. We've been plotted against. Arrow Turtles prefer a type of wood known as Fragrant Cedar Wood. So as long as a ship made

from this material travels along Law river, it would be frequently be beset by attacks from Arrow Turtles. My ship had just been repaired at River Law City, so I suspect that they might have used Fragrant Cedar Wood to patch it up and then just covered it with paint. The paint immediately fell off as it touched water, revealing the wood underneath. The Arrow Turtles must have smelled it thus they have attacked our ship.”

Zhao Hai started, then his complexion changed as he looked at Might. Might also frowned, and as soon as he saw Zhao Hai look at him, he didn't freeze but instead creased his eyebrows even more, “Mister, is it that?”

Zhao Hai nodded, “It is, I suspect that this matter is Grand Duke Lionheart's doing. He should be able to do that.”

Might's face turned ugly, “Does he have any shame? To deal with us, he'll sacrifice the other people onboard?”

Zhao Hai shook his head, “For the Grand Duke, killing others as collateral isn't important, eliminating our group is. He will be mocked continuously as long as we are alive so how could he let this opportunity pass?”

As soon as Stack heard their conversation he said, “So you're saying that this is Grand Duke Lionhearts doing? Just to kill you?”

Zhao Hai nodded, “It's highly probable that it is so. Right from Hundred Battles Fortress, the Grand Duke didn't stop attacking me. And in the entire process, I had managed to kill about ten thousand of the Grand Duke's people. You could imagine his hatred towards me. Brother Stack, it seems like I have implicated you this time. But this seems very strange, how did they know that I would ride your ship?”

Might smiled bitterly, “It must be because of me. Our Shelley Family's cooperation with the other merchants was quite clear to Grand Duke Lionheart. Ever since we arrived inside River Law City, the Grand Duke hadn't been able to deal with us, so he may

have placed his hand on Brother Stack's ship. It might be possible that he also set up some ambushes on the road since he couldn't be sure whether we'll continue by land or water. It seems like we had underestimated him this time."

Stack also smiled bitterly, he didn't think that he would become a collateral victim. Law river's Arrow Turtles were quite a difficult creature to deal with. A single turtle might be manageable, but a large scale attack like this was absolutely a nightmare for a ship captain.

Might turned his head to Stack and said, "Stack, what means do we have to survive this?"

Stack forced a smile as he replied, "We can only abandon the ship and take refuge on another one to survive, but the ship is already done for."

Might nodded, "So we need to leave the ship behind. Don't worry Brother Stack, Shelley family would certainly compensate you. This matter is caused by us, so we cannot let you suffer some losses."

Hearing Might, Zhao Hai secretly nodded. He heavily approved Shelley Family's approach. From his point of view, Zhao Hai thought that Shelley Family couldn't be bad people.

Seeing the amount of Arrow Turtles gathering below, Zhao Hai suddenly said, "I'll try to see whether I could do something about these turtles, maybe we don't need to abandon the ship. Stack, anchor the ship and make all the other people take refuge inside."

When Stack heard what Zhao Hai said, his eyes couldn't help but light up. Then he immediately had his crewmen anchor the ship. Although Might said that they will compensate for the ship, Stack much preferred keeping this one. This ship was made by him from scratch, it was a family member to him. He has feelings for this ship so he didn't want to leave it behind as much as possible.

However, he still prepared the lifeboats. Keeping lives was much more important. Now that there were a lot of Arrow Turtles in the river, the ships around it have left the vicinity so there were no other ships that could be seen close by. This also brought more convenience for Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai's method was actually very simple. It was based on what Laura just suggested before, to just have the river water enter the Space. Doing so, the other creatures in it would also get carried along. Naturally, these Arrow Turtles weren't exceptions.

When the ship was properly anchored, Zhao Hai turned to Stack and said, "Brother Stack, you need to control the ship and have the sails retreat. I'll be causing the river to shake a lot, so if something goes wrong, the ship may turn over."

Stack thought that Zhao Hai would use water element magic, so he didn't ask anything more. He just nodded and commanded the sailors to take down the sails. Then he went to the helm and took control of the ship.

Seeing that they were prepared, Zhao Hai immediately brandished his Ghost Staff and went to the side of the ship. Then as he supposedly muttered a spell, he ordered Cai'er to make a spatial rift on the river and absorb the water directly.

Might and Stack looked carefully at Zhao Hai, they didn't know what Zhao Hai intends to do. At this time, at the surface of the river a huge spatial rift suddenly appeared, absorbing the river. Before long, a giant whirlpool was sucking everything towards it, even the ship they were riding on.

Might and Stack were frightened, they didn't expect Zhao Hai to not use water element magic. Instead, it seemed like Zhao Hai just used the very rare spatial magic.

Space Mages were the most difficult type of people to meet in the continent. Some people didn't even know many space magic spells, but all of them were aware of the most iconic spatial magic out

there which was the spatial rift.

Seeing the spatial rift on the surface of the river, they certainly thought that Zhao Hai was a Space Mage. Might's eyes lit up as he looked at Zhao Hai, he also heavily praised the family's good luck.

Space Mages were very precious in the Continent. Any Power wanted to obtain a Space Mage for themselves. If the fact that Zhao Hai was a Space Mage were to become known, he would get the highest reception everywhere he'll go.

Might and the others felt the amount of water in the river was slowly decreasing. With their naked eyes, they could see the volume of water the spatial rift was absorbing.

Zhao Hai let Cai'er observe the Arrow Turtles in the water. As long as all the turtles were gone, only then will he stop.

Before long, Cai'er informed him that all of the Arrow Turtles surrounding the ship, about 300, had already been absorbed. Zhao Hai immediately stopped the rift, making the rift vanish from the surface of the river.

As soon as the rift vanished, the people on the boat immediately let out sighs of relief. Even though the ship had loosened its anchor, they felt that they were still gonna get sucked into the rift. So when they see that the rift was gone, they immediately relaxed.

A short while after the rift was stopped, the river's water level became normal, and it became calm. But the people onboard the ship looked at Zhao Hai strangely.

One must know that Space Mages were the most exalted among all the other Mages. And it was clear that what Zhao Hai just used was a Space Mage's spell.

Might looked at Zhao Hai and said, "I didn't think that mister is unexpectedly a Space Mage, I had been very disrespectful."

Zhao Hai looked at Might's appearance and laughed, "Come on,

I'm just a Space Mage, not your mother. No need to be serious."

Might also laughed, then Stack came over. He looked at Zhao Hai strangely and said, "If I tell others that I have a Space Mage as a friend, nobody will believe me."

Zhao Hai and Might laughed. Zhao Hai looked at the river and said, "These turtles definitely aren't the only things waiting for us along the river. I'm afraid that Grand Duke Lionheart still has some tricks up his sleeves. We should get going, the sooner we arrive at Sky Water City, the safer we'll be." Stack agreed and immediately had the crew set the ship up for sail.

Zhao Hai pretended to be tired and said, "Right, since you'll be busy, I'll go back to my room and rest." Then he waved his hand to Might as he walked towards his room. Might didn't stop him, in fact, he was even more excited as well as happy for the family. For Shelley family to get in touch with a Space Mage was a very fortuitous encounter for them.

When Zhao Hai entered his room, he immediately went into the Space. Upon entering the Space, Zhao Hai seemed to hear a prompt on his mind but he didn't notice what it was. So when he arrived at the Space, he went to Cai'er and said, "Cai'er, what just happened."

Cai'er smiled and said, "Young Master, the Space levelled up. The Farm went up by one level while the Ranch went up by five, now it is level 14. Moreover, the Space has gained a new function which are the fisheries. If young master is thinking about farming fish, he could go to the ranch where the river is placed. The aquatic animals will not account for the limit imposed on land animals. Master can raise another 10,000 magic beasts in the river. After reaching level 10, all of the animals raised in the ranch will be immediately upgraded to become magic beasts, so common animals will be upgraded to magic beasts."

Zhao Hai felt great happiness upon hearing the news. He didn't

expect to gain such a huge benefit. After upgrading the Ranch to level 10, all animals inside would actually be turned into magic beasts. Moreover, he can now breed some fishes, this was an excellent gain.

However, he immediately had a thought, he turned to Cai'er and said, "Cai'er, are the Fire Fishes I raised inside the hot spring included in the fisheries function?"

Cai'er nodded, "So long as the animal lives in water, it is included in the function. Not only can you raise aquatic animals, the amount of land animals that can be raised has been increased to 10,000 as well. Master can now raise 10,000 aquatic magic beasts as well as 10,000 land magic beasts."

Hearing Cai'er, Zhao Hai couldn't help but laugh and said, "Good! Fantastic! Let's go, when we enter the house you'll have to tell me about the benefits of this upgrade."

Chapter 351 – Ancient Black Permafrost

Laura and the other were also in the Space and had heard Cai'er's words. Upgrading the Space was very important for Zhao Hai, the farm rose by a level, while the Ranch by five.

What made Zhao Hai surprised was that not only did the Ranch increase the capacity of animals that can be reared, it also turned all of them into magic beasts.

The fact that the Ranch can now support a total of twenty thousand animals, ten thousand aquatic and ten thousand terrestrial, was a great outcome. These magic beasts not only can bring Zhao Hai some income, it could also bolster his fighting strength by a lot.

Another important thing that Cai'er told Zhao Hai was the fact that because of the massive amount of river water he absorbed this time which contained plankton as well as some single celled organisms, they managed to create their own ecosystem inside the Space which was very helpful in its further evolution. If Zhao Hai kept doing this, the Space could slowly develop into its own world, a world that completely belongs to Zhao Hai.

Hearing Cai'er's words, Zhao Hai understood the main direction of the Space, which was forming a complete world. This sounded very good.

Currently, many things inside the space were data. Although this was very convenient for Zhao Hai, it also can only function like a machine, everything was lifeless. If the Space becomes a complete world, then it would be filled with abundant vitality.

Zhao Hai became excited with the prospects of what Cai'er just said, he now has found a direction for the Space to evolve to. However, what he needed right now was fully utilize the abilities of the Space.

Zhao Hai didn't need the magic beasts to fight for him, he has undead to do that. The biggest use of the space currently was to provide him with income. Therefore he was currently prioritizing raising cattle and argali as well as some fire fishes, but he only raised 5,000 of them while the other 5,000 is for raising some ordinary Scaleless Fish.

This fish was very common all throughout the continent, so long as there was freshwater, this fish will be there. This was also the fish that was mostly consumed by humans in the continent. Before, Zhao Hai always wanted to purchase this fish for frying, but it didn't get go through.

With the amount of water he took in from the river, it was impossible for the Arrow Turtles to be the only animals that Zhao Hai managed to catch. There were also many kinds of fish present, each one had their own unique picture inside the Ranch shop. Zhao Hai can buy these anytime whenever he wanted to try some fried fish.

Zhao Hai didn't care too much about the living conditions of these animals inside the Space. As long as Cai'er and Mu'er was here, Zhao Hai didn't need to worry.

Not only did the Space level up when he place river water in it, it also gave Zhao Hai the idea towards the Space's further progression. Now if he placed seawater inside the Space, wouldn't it level up? If this was the case, then it would be fantastic.

Probably because Zhao Hai had seized the surrounding Arrow Turtles, there were no attacks that came to the ship the rest of the day. But they also didn't see any other ships, possibly because they fled when the group of Arrow Turtles arrived. Arrow Turtles could heavily damage any ship, so the other vessels may have sought a safe place and didn't dare travel on the river in the meantime.

Zhao Hai didn't go out in the evening, he was inside the Space studying. There weren't a lot of new function that was provided to

the Ranch. Apart from raising and upgrading the animals, there weren't much.

But the fact that the Farm leveled up made Zhao Hai excited. One should know that it had been quite a long time since the Farm leveled up to the point where Zhao Hai became worried.

With continual upgrades to the Farm, he could open the processing field function. It was only through this that Zhao Hai could solve the poison inside his body. Now that he has two beautiful fiancées, he doesn't want to die early. But if the poison from the Water of Nothingness couldn't be removed, he could only live the lifespan of an ordinary person, perhaps even shorter. It was known that ordinary people in the continent would live until about 80 to 100 years old, while those with magic and battle qi in them could live until 120. Moreover, Zhao Hai's body was weaker than an average person. At this rate, he could only live until he is about 60 or 70.

Nobody doesn't think about living a long life, so Zhao Hai was naturally the same. He has not lived enough yet, so he would find ways so he could live a bit longer. Removing the poison was first in the list.

But it was currently winter season, so looking for special plants would be an arduous task. Therefore, Zhao Hai can only wait until the beginning of spring to do anything.

However, absorbing the river's water gave Zhao Hai a wake-up call. Many common things in the continent could upgrade the Space as well. This definitely was a good thing for Zhao Hai.

The next morning, Zhao Hai appeared early on the top deck. To be honest, the river's scenery was very beautiful. Back on Earth, Zhao Hai had also been crossing rivers. But back then, the water was already filled with pollution, so even if he rode a boat he wouldn't dare go in the water since it looked extremely dirty.

But now, Law river still hasn't been polluted so the surface was

very clear. The morning sun would reflect onto the water and make the surface red, it was very attractive to look at.

Zhao Hai looked at the surface of the river and sighed, "It's so beautiful. I can't seem to get tired of this scene."

Then Stack's voice suddenly came from his side, "Don't worry, if you stare at it everyday, you'll eventually get tired of it. How are you feeling? Are you well?"

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "I'm fine. Don't say any more. I was really exhausted yesterday." Stack smiled and didn't say anything more. He turned to look at the river and the two of them enjoyed the scene.

At this time, a crewman came over. At first he looked at Zhao Hai with an idolizing gaze but then recovered and turned to Stack, "Captain, I think there's something strange going on. Ever since yesterday, we couldn't spot even a single ship. Even if they were afraid of the Arrow Turtles, they couldn't have stalled sailing for such a long time."

Stack stared blankly, then his complexion changed as he said, "You didn't see any ships even yesterday evening?"

Because Law river was a major waterway, ships travelling at night was a common occurrence here. Stack had already saw quite a lot of them throughout his time sailing.

But if they didn't see any ships travelling at night yesterday, then that would be very strange. The sailor nodded and replied, "Yesterday night, not even one ship passed by. Ever since our ship was attacked by the Arrow Turtles, we didn't see any other ships around."

Stack's expression was gloomy as he turned to Zhao Hai, "Wales, it looks like some people really wants to deal with us, you should get ready. I suspect that this is Grand Duke Lionheart's doing. After today, we'll be able to arrive at Sky Water city. The fact that

he came to deal with us meant that we are about to enter Sky Water City's territory. And when we arrive there, we shall be within Calci Family's jurisdiction, the Grand Duke cannot act on us then so he only has this morning to deal with us."

Zhao Hai was also gloomy as he replied, "There is really a possibility that it is Grand Duke Lionheart, he will not just let us off easily. If we arrive at Sky Water City, he may not have any opportunity to deal with us. If we survive, then he would suffer from criticisms in the capital, it seems like we must really prepare ourselves."

At this time, Might also walked out, with anger on his face he said, "Lionheart, good. I really thought that he will behave these days. But rest assured, as soon as we arrive at Sky Water City, Lionheart wouldn't be able to threaten your safety again. The Grand Duke has this time as his last opportunity to deal with us, after we survive this, our safety is guaranteed."

Zhao Hai forced a smile and said, "We still have to survive today. Talking about it is useless, let's just see how far Grand Duke Lionheart would go just to deal with us."

After he said this, they saw a small boat appear at the distance. The boat looked like a ship's lifeboat, it was something not normally used to travel in the river.

On the small boat, five figures could be seen. The five wore magic robes that were sky-blue in color. On their hands were magic staffs. Their boat didn't have and sails nor paddles, but the boat was travelling very fast.

Might looked at the boat and said, "Water element mages. It's a good plan, in this river, dealing with us using Water element mages is the most appropriate thing to do. Brother, prepare yourself."

After his voice fell, the mages on the boat moved. They held up their magic staffs and pronounced some incantations. Then the

group saw ten water dragons appear, travelling along the surface of the river and heading towards the ship.

Zhao Hai didn't hesitate and waved his staff, a giant wind blade appeared and went to chop towards the water dragons.

However, the dragons were made of water. Although the dragons lost their form, they managed to recover after only a short while. After reforming, the dragons resumed to hit the ship.

Zhao Hai's complexion changed, he didn't think that these things would be difficult to deal with. He waved his staff again as several huge fireballs appeared to block the water dragons.

Water and Fire were incompatible with each other, the dragons didn't stop upon the arrival of the fireballs and instead intended to pierce through. To the mages' dismay, Zhao Hai's fireballs were very tenacious, halting the dragons' advance. The two spells got entangled with each other and both refused to budge, it was a surprise that the fireballs even managed to continually fight back.

At this time, several ice arrows were shot towards Zhao Hai. Each ice arrow emitted a blue light, but the blue that it showed wasn't something resembling the color of common water. Instead, it looked surprisingly like a poison's blue color.

Seeing the arrows appearing suddenly, Might's face turned ugly as he exclaimed, "Ancient Black Permafrost!!"

A mage riding on the boat coldly laughed and said, "The boy has good eyesight. Dying under the hands of this old man and my companions wouldn't be shameful."

When the arrows arrived right in front of Zhao Hai, and when it seems like he couldn't evade. Might became shocked when he saw Zhao Hai's figure suddenly vanish from the deck of the ship.

Chapter 352 – Big Harvests

When Might saw this, he was stunned at first but then became relieved. He thought that Zhao Hai just used the Space Mage's spell 'Teleportation'. This spell can instantaneously shift oneself to another place, naturally it would be a place that the eye can see; if it isn't, then one may get trapped inside the turbulence of space and time.

Might didn't know that Zhao Hai just used the Space monitor's function. The monitor can allow Zhao Hai to teleport freely within its scope of view. Currently the monitor's range is two kilometers, which was also the area where Zhao Hai can move freely; if he wanted to go somewhere in that range, nobody can stop him.

While the five Water element mages on the boat were stunned, Zhao Hai suddenly arrived at the center of their boat along with a storm of wind blades. Before the Water element mages got to recover from their confusion, they were already cut to pieces.

After Zhao Hai killed the Water Mages, he immediately took them inside the Space. Just after they were placed inside, the Space transmitted a prompt to Zhao Hai, "Deadly toxic water has entered the Space. Testing water quality, water is cold and toxic, highly aggressive and extremely dense. Space absorbs new type of water, opened up new cold water spring."

Zhao Hai stared, then he asked Cai'er what just happened. Cai'er told Zhao Hai that the Water element Mages had this cold and toxic water inside them. The water was extremely poisonous and lethal. This water can increase the abilities of the Space so it absorbed the water and created a new cold spring. The quality of the water in the spring was the same as the cold toxic water from earlier.

Zhai Hai was surprised, and immediately turned the Mages into undead and asked them for more information. The mages didn't

hide anything from Zhao Hai, they told him that this water was one of the treasures all Water element Mages yearn for, Profound Glacial Liquid. The one that they obtained had very lethal poison in it, moreover, it was also very cold; even colder than solid ice. But what was strange about this liquid was that even though it was colder than ice, it maintained its liquid state and did not freeze.

However, as long as this liquid comes in contact with another object, it will freeze it immediately. One could say that if a Water element Mage could get their hands on this thing, their strength could get easily increased by at least five levels.

These five Water element mages had 7th rank strength, so adding on the fact that they had Profound Glacial Liquid, they managed to rack up infamy all throughout the continent. This was the reason Might shouted ‘Ancient Black Permafrost’ before.

Coincidentally, they also took refuge under Grand Duke Lionheart these past years. This time, they were asked by Lionheart to go deal with Zhao Hai. They knew that Zhao Hai wasn’t weak so to ensure the accomplishment of the task, they decided to bring their Profound Glacial Liquid. But they didn’t expect that not only did they fail, they also gave Zhao Hai’s Space a new profound glacial spring.

Zhao Hai was quite happy, he appeared back on the ship as Might looked at him silly. Seeing Might’s appearance, Zhao Hai couldn’t help but smile and say, “We’re good, the Ancient Black Permafrosts wouldn’t bother us anymore. Let’s go on, Grand Duke has sent a battleship up ahead.”

Might and Stack didn’t ask anything, they slowly sailed on the river and before long they saw a giant warship. The warship wasn’t bigger than Stack’s ship, but it still displaced about 5,000 tons of water. This was because even though the ship wasn’t outfitted for cargo transport, it still carried a large number of magic cannons and guns as well as some military necessities. The ship also carried 5,000 soldiers onboard. A flag waved on top of the

ship bearing the image of a fierce swordfish.

When Might saw the battleship, his face couldn't help but turn ugly. "A Swordfish! Isn't that Rosen Empire's famous Swordfish? How could it appear here? Did Grand Duke Lionheart lose his mind?"

At this time, Zhao Hai saw that the Swordfish was turning to align its cannons towards their ship and was getting ready to shoot. Zhao Hai certainly wouldn't allow that to happen, if the cannons manage to fire, their ship will certainly get obliterated.

Zhao Hai waved his hand as a large number of undead appeared on the Swordfish. The soldiers onboard didn't have time to understand the situation before the undead started their slaughter.

After the soldiers were dealt with, Zhao Hai immediately absorbed the ship to the Space. But under Might's eyes, it looked like Zhao Hai swallowed the Swordfish using a spatial rift.

When Zhao Hai finished taking the Swordfish, Might immediately took two steps forwards to support him. Zhao Hai shook his head and said, "I'm alright. I just need to take a break. I'll head back and rest. I'll leave the rest to you." Then Zhao Hai walked towards his cabin.

Zhao Hai wasn't actually tired, he just wanted to head back to the Space and look at his huge harvests. This time he has really profited greatly. He didn't think that Grand Duke Lionheart would actually be so generous and send him a warship.

It was quite obvious that this warship wasn't meant for freshwater travel. It can be clearly seen that this was meant for the sea. Now that Law river was about to connect with the sea, the warship was only able to reach here, it was impossible for it to travel along Law river seeing the volume of water it displaced.

The soldiers on board were also turned into undead by Zhao Hai. Not only did he gain a battleship, he also didn't have to worry

about people to man it. Also a more important thing was that Zhao Hai learned Water element Magic as well as gaining a Profound Glacial spring.

Upon entering the Space, Zhao Hai went to the Profound Glacial spring first. The profound glacial spring was just right next to the life liquid spring and the hot spring. The life liquid spring's water looked very clear, but even if it looked very ordinary, people could actually feel their vitality filling up just by looking at it. The hot spring has mists that filled its vicinity, and its temperature certainly wasn't low.

The profound glacial spring showed a completely different appearance. It showed a very deep blue color, and acted like stagnant water. Looking at it gave people a deathly feeling.

Zhao Hai poked a wooden stick towards the glacial spring. The stick immediately turned into ice as soon as it entered the spring, covering its entire surface with a layer of frost.

Zhao Hai immediately withdrew the stick and gently touched it, but the stick immediately turned into shards. Zhao Hai couldn't help but murmur, "I didn't expect this profound glacial liquid to be so powerful. Amazing."

Laura and the others also nodded, they didn't think that the profound glacial spring would be this fierce. It surprisingly destroyed the wooden stick easily, no wonder the ancient black permafrosts became rampant in the continent just by having profound glacial liquid.

The group arrived at the Ranch where the Swordfish was. The Ranch has a river, and now that it has been expanded, the Swordfish happened to fit inside.

Zhao Hai and the others got up the Swordfish and examined it well. The Swordfish had more than 5,000 people inside, 120 magic cannons, as well as 360 ballistas. The ship also had living commodities, enough for 5,000 people to last for three months.

This ensures that the warship could fight for a considerable amount of time.

The decks on the ship reached ten levels. It had a total of ten main and secondary masts, enough for it to reach 25 knots. This type of ship can definitely be called a fast ship. This type of speedy vessel was considered to be Rosen Empire's main naval force. Although it wasn't the largest of warships, it was the type of naval warship the empire mostly used.

Zhao Hai was impressed, this ship was very good. Another important point about this ship was the quality of lumber used to build it. With this type of lumber as well as its thick hull, it could withstand sailing for a very long time, a very good quality for a military product.

After staying inside the Space the entire morning, Zhao Hai came out at lunch and saw Stack and Might. Zhao Hai went towards them and asked, "What happened? What are you looking at, is there more trouble?"

The two saw Zhao Hai coming out and smiled. Stack had a very sincere smile while Might had a hint of awe in it.

Stack smiled and said, "It's all right, we're now inside Sky Water City's waters. Nobody would dare do anything on this region, even Grand Duke Lionheart. See that? That is Calci Family's Spectre Battleship."

Zhao Hai followed Stack's gaze, not far away from their ship was a black battleship. The ship's entire body was black, and had a size just enough to allow for freshwater travel. When it just stayed there, it really looked like a spectre.

The Stack continued, "Don't think that Calci Family's Spectre battleships are inferior to the Swordfish ships just because of its size. That ship is very equipped for magic attacks. If a spectre and a swordfish face each other out in sea, the swordfish would certainly lose.

Zhao Hai asked, “Do the Spectre Battleships not belong to Rosen Empire’s Naval command?”

Stack nodded and smiled, “They’re not, these Spectre ships are Calci Family’s private escort vessels, so they don’t belong to the empire. There were a lot of Great families on the empire that have their own fleet. These ships were used to increase the family’s strength as well as escort these families’ cargo on sea. They were rarely used for attack, they were mainly for protecting cargo ships.”

Zhao Hai nodded, it seems like Rosen Empire was much more powerful than he expected. Having these families build their own fleet, one could imagine the entire country’s overall strength.

The following travel was smooth, they didn’t encounter any more trouble. They would also see Spectre ships from time to time. After sailing for half a day, the amount of Spectre ships they saw amounted to about 20, this wasn’t a small number, it was quite astonishing.

When they arrived, their ship slowed down. In fact, they couldn’t help but slow down, there were now a lot more ships along the river. It looked just like the lively scene back at Hundred Battles Fortress. There were docks everywhere, and ships would go there often to load and unload their cargo. The entire region looked very busy.

Chapter 353 – Sky Water City

Zhao Hai looked at these docks and turned his head to Stack, “Brother Stack, what are these docks? Do these also belong to Sky Water City?”

Stack nodded, “Yes. Even though Sky Water City has a very good harbor, there are a lot of ships passing through. River ships, sea ships, all kinds of vessels come here everyday and all of them wouldn’t be able to fit inside the city. Although these small piers were still quite a ways from Sky Water City, they could still transport the goods by land. This method beats just waiting for a free space to dock on.”

Zhao Hai nodded, “Yeah, it’s really quite far away. Can we get to Sky Water City this evening?”

Stack shook his head, “We can’t get there tonight. We’ll find a pier to dock on and then rest. Tomorrow we’ll arrive at Sky Water City. The Shelley Family has a private dock inside so we can go there and disembark, we don’t need to wait for another ship to free up some space.”

Zhao Hai nodded and simultaneously developed an understanding of Shelley Family’s forces inside Sky Water City. According to everything he has heard of until now, Sky Water City was a place of wealth and prosperity. For the Shelley Family to have their own private port there meant that they had quite some standing inside Sky Water City.

Evening came and Stack docked their ship at something called the mercenary’s pier. From the name, there were a lot of mercenaries present everywhere in the pier. Some mercenaries acted as guards for the ships while some carried cargo between the ships and the docks.

A mercenary as a coolie? This may sound absurd, but its not. What were mercenaries? They were only ordinary civilians in the

first place. Most of them lost their home because of various reasons. In order to survive and not become slaves, they could only be mercenaries.

Because their fighting power was very weak and the fact that they have families to feed. They wouldn't dare take very dangerous tasks. They can only take jobs like being a courier for letters. These tasks weren't dangerous but their remuneration weren't high, only enough to live by.

But since these jobs weren't available everyday, what other thing could they do? They could only do manual labor, so generally one couldn't distinguish between coolies and mercenaries.

Piers like these that were outside Sky Water City and wasn't managed properly by the Calci Family were very unregulated. With mercenaries from different backgrounds mingling with each other, there was only one word to describe these docks, chaos, they were very chaotic.

When their ship stopped at the pier, Stack told Zhao Hai that it was best for them to not disembark at this pier. Although Zhao Hai was strong, there's no benefit in provoking another group.

Zhao Hai didn't want to go to the pier either. Such small pier couldn't catch his attention. Like what Stack implied, these mercenaries were quite rough people; who knows what they'll do when they see beautiful women like Laura and the others? Zhao Hai didn't want to know the answer.

They didn't have to worry about mercenaries while being onboard a ship. For the mercenaries, the people onboard were their providers for food and clothing. No one would intentionally go inside a ship just to look for trouble.

They rested inside the ship that night and when morning came, Zhao Hai finally moved closer towards Sky Water City. After another two hours of sailing, they could already see Sky Water City's wall vaguely.

The nearer they are from Sky Water City, the more surprised Zhao Hai became. His expectation for how big Sky Water City was blown away. The city was much much bigger than River Law City. River Law city has about 1 million citizens, but looking at how Sky Water City was three times bigger than River Law City, its population could possibly be 3 million!

There weren't many large cities such as this in the continent. And for the Calci Family to be able to control all of such a city was a very amazing feat. One should know that even the emperor of Rosen Empire couldn't touch this city, this showed Zhao Hai how much power and influence Calci Family held.

Zhao Hai didn't believe that the Radiant Church didn't know that Calci Family was a family of Dark Mages. The Radiant Church certainly knew, but they couldn't do anything about it. This made Calci Family look even more formidable. No wonder the family was the major pillar within the League of Dark Mages, only they have this kind of strength.

Soon, the ship slowly entered a small dock right next to Sky Water City. The dock wasn't big, maybe it could fit five or six ships like theirs. It was a small pier, but Might told Zhao Hai that even though it was Shelley Family who constructed this, they still needed to pay a million gold coins as fee every year. If they don't, the Calci family would confiscate this pier.

For a pier of this size costing 1 million gold coins per year explains how large of a treasure trove Sky Water City was. For the Calci Family to have complete hegemony of this city, they surely did have formidable strength.

When the ship docked at the pier, Zhao Hai noticed that there were already people waiting there. Most of these people wore silken clothes mostly used by merchants, they looked very conspicuous.

Looking at these people, Might turned his head to Zhao Hai and

said, “They came to meet us. The family already sent me a message to treat mister and his group with utmost courtesy.”

Zhao Hai froze for a moment then shook his head, “This is too much. I may not be worth it.”

Might smiled faintly, “It’s absolutely worth it. Mister suffered because of your milk wine cooperation with the family. Mister is certainly worth it. Let’s head down.”

Zhao Hai didn’t say anything, he just followed Might in disembarking from the ship. Their carriage was also naturally unloaded, as well as their bulls.

Just as the two men arrived at the pier, the merchant dressed men immediately welcomed them. The one at the front was a fat man that looked to be 40 something years old. He laughed and said to Zhao Hai and Might, “The head of Sky Water City’s Shelley Hotel, Marriott, has met Mister Wales and Captain Might.”

Might also gave Marriott a salute and said, “I won’t dare, Manager Marriott is too polite.”

Zhao Hai laughed and said “For this one to make Manager Marriott come, this one is certainly humbled.”

Marriott laughed and said, “Mister is too polite, putting your life on the line to help Shelley Family, Mister is very well worth it. Sir, please get on the carriage, the hotel has prepared a meal and is only waiting for mister to come.”

Upon hearing Marriott, Zhao Hai smiled and said, “Then I’ll be impolite. Then, Manager, please.” Then the group got onto their respective carriages and headed towards Sky Water City.

While entering the city, Zhao Hai sized Sky Water City up. The city certainly deserved to be called Sky Water City, inside the city were numerous small creeks as well as bridges. Taking this as a whole, the entire city looked very unusual.

The city was bustling with people, pedestrians weaving through

the traffic. Although there were a lot of creeks inside the city, the streets were extremely spacious. There were also a lot of shops along the street. Various carriages and people could be seen entering and exiting these shops. Businesses on these stores were very good.

From time to time, Zhao Hai could see people wearing standard issue leather armor, they were carrying a two-handed sword and were walking on the street. These people were looking around the place as though monitoring for something. On the leather armor of these people, the insignia of the Calci Family was printed, it seems like they were people from the Calci Family.

Looking at these people, Zhao Hai turned to Laura and asked, “Laura, who are these people? Are they the City Garrison? Does the Calci Family send them to maintain public security?”

Laura smiles and answered, “From what I heard, Sky Water City has a unique organization called the Urban Administrative and Law Enforcement Bureau. They were tasked specifically to handle public security. They were also responsible for cleaning the streets and other miscellaneous work. Their influence inside Sky Water City is quite big.”

Zhao Hai was stunned. He didn’t think that he would hear the words Urban Administrative and Law Enforcement Bureau again after coming to Ark Continent. Isn’t it too weird? Did the Calci Family also cross over? Otherwise how could such a specific name arise?

Gently shook his head and threw out these useless ideas, Zhao Hai continued to observe everything inside the city. It must be said that Sky Water City was the most prosperous city Zhao Hai has ever seen. But such city was actually placed second next to Carson City, it made it difficult to imagine what Carson City looked like.

After travelling for about an hour, their carriage stopped. Zhao Hai looked outside and saw that they had reached a tall multi-story

building. This was the highest building Zhao Hai has seen after arriving at Ark Continent.

In front of the building was a big square with a flower bed in the middle. Inscribed on the flower bed was Shelly Family's insignia composed of flowers of different colors.

Zhao Hai got down from his carriage as Might and Marriott came to greet him. Marriott bowed to Zhao Hai and said, "Mister, the food and wine are ready. Today, the hotel will treat mister with our hospitality."

Zhao Hai laughed and said, "Then, Manager, let's go. I'm famished." Marriott replied, "Then, Mister, this way please." Then the group entered the hotel together.

Zhao Hai didn't know if he was under an illusion or something. He felt that Manager Marriott was extremely enthusiastic about him. He had an overwhelming amount of energy in him.

What he didn't actually know was that when they travelled towards the city, Might already told Marriott that Zhao Hai was a Space Mage. To any power, grabbing a Space Mage to their side was top level priority. When Marriott knew that Zhao Hai was a Space Mage, naturally he would get extremely passionate; he's afraid of showing a low amount of hospitality to Zhao Hai.

Sky Water City's Shelley Hotel was very luxurious, it was full of high quality services. The people coming in and out of it were all well dressed and looked well educated. One only needed a glance to know that the business was doing very well. All of the guests they met greeted Marriott, it can be seen that these people see some importance in the hotel's manager.

Zhao Hai saw that these people must be small nobles and didn't have that high of an identity. Although they were inside the Shelley Hotel as guests, that didn't dare offend Marriott. They also flatter the manager from time to time, which was good for their families and businesses.

But Marriott didn't look down on them just because of their status. He also greeted the people who approached him with a warm reception. There wasn't an ounce of disrespect given to them, elevating Zhao Hai's evaluation of Marriott. The hotel's manager looked like a well-mannered gentleman.

Before long, the group entered the hotel's elevator and went up ten floors. While heading up, Marriott turned to Zhao Hai, "We have two dining halls in the hotel, one at the first floor while the other one is at the tenth floor. The restaurants on the first floor are open to everyone to dine in. But the one on the tenth floor is different, not even guests on the hotel can just get access to that dining hall. Only a few people are able to dine there, namely, the hotel's VIPs. The chef on the 10th floor dining hall is one of the pinnacle chefs inside Rosen Empire. Even if you compare him to the Imperial Chef, he wouldn't lose."

Zhao Hai smiled, "The Shelley Hotel is already extraordinary just by seeing that they managed to build their business throughout the continent. Now, seeing people like manager, no wonder the business is doing very well."

Marriott looked proud, "Mister overpraised me. Inside Shelley Family, there are a lot of people like me, as numerous as the hairs on an ox. I'm just a small hotel manager."

Might actually laughed and said, "Manager Marriott is too modest. There are around 11,200 Shelley hotels in the continent. And if we just base on income generated, Sky Water City branch could rank in the top ten. This shows how formidable Manager Marriott is."

Upon hearing this, Zhao Hai looked at Marriott under a new light. He didn't expect that this fat man could be so formidable that among the 11,200 hotels, he would actually rank in the top ten. Wasn't this extremely amazing?

Although the hotels have the same reputation, the cities that they

were located in were different. It was not easy to rank in the top ten among this number of hotels. Even if you're placed on a favorable location, there was still a lot to do regarding relationships, staff management, guest management and more. When you look at it in this perspective, you could see how a formidable of a businessman Marriott was.

When Marriot heard what Might said, his smile became even more radiant. Then the turned to Might and said, "I couldn't compare to Captain Might. Captain Might is a captain of the family headquarters' garrison force. He couldn't be dispatched easily, the power he wields is much bigger than us small officials."

Might stiffly smiled, "I'm just a little captain, not that powerful. Manager is too polite." Then the group laughed as they headed towards the 10th floor dining hall.

When the elevator's door opened, Zhao Hai and Might became surprised. They didn't expect that someone else would be present at the dining hall. And the person was already eating and drinking inside.

Chapter 354 – 13th Young Master

Zhao Hai noticed that Marriott already had cleared the place earlier. Inside the dining hall, there was only one table with something in it, the other tables were empty. There were well-dressed waiters present on the vicinity, and all of them were staring at the young man eating the food and drinking the wine on the table.

Upon analyzing the situation, Zhao Hai reckoned that the young man must be a member of Shelley Family. Moreover, his status couldn't be that low, otherwise the waiters wouldn't have left him alone.

When Marriott saw the young man, his complexion changed and looked at the young man with a stiff smile, "13th young master, you came."

The young man didn't care about Marriott. He just continued to eat and drink. At this time Might came forward and greeted, "Might has seen 13th young master."

Thirteenth young master's attitude to Might was much better. He looked up at Might and said, "Might, how come you're here?"

Might smiled and said, "This time, I was sent by the family to escort Mister Wales." Then Might introduced the 13th young master to Zhao Hai, "This is Mister Wales, a distinguished guest of the family, they instructed to provide him with the highest level of hospitality."

Might's words actually warned the young master to mind his attitude towards Zhao Hai. To Great Nobles such as Shelley Family, their system of education had already been ironed out. All family descendants would be educated from a very early age, something most noble families do.

Naturally, it was impossible for them to learn by just going to

regular classes. So to merchant family such as Shelley Family, they would also teach their children merchant training from their early years. But to be a successful merchant, one should have good people skills, so they would generally bring their descendants to social events to hone their skills. The Shelley Family was good at this aspect, their descendants were already very prepared.

But there would always be one or two black sheep inside a Family, and this 13th young master was Shelley Family's black sheep. Even though the education that he received from childhood was the same as his elder brothers, the 13th young master still turned out different, giving the family a huge headache.

Although this 13th young master had learned a lot of things, he didn't use it at the appropriate places. In the entire Shelley Family, he was the only one who acted like a spoiled brat. Apart from some high ranking elders in the family, he didn't give anybody any face. Some time ago, he actually had a fight with the son of Grand Duke Lionheart. Later on, the Grand Duke went on to suppress Shelley Family's business, the business matter and the earlier scuffle weren't completely unrelated with each other.

But the mother of this 13th young master also belonged to a Great Family that was also very influential. This made his mother have a high standing within the family. It may be because of this reason that the 13th young master was very arrogant. He even looked down on his elder brothers.

This character of his was what made the Shelley Family's head hurt. He didn't give anyone face, he even treated Marriott like trash. He even made huge troubles for the family, this made the Shelley Family come up of ways in dealing with the troubles he caused.

But in the end, he was a member of the Shelley family and had an influential mother so nobody inside the family dared to be impolite to him. Even for someone like Marriott, he still needed to show respect.

This made him even more lawless. In the past few days, it wasn't known how many businesses of Shelley Family he managed to destroy. The number of people he offended wasn't low either. Fortunately, they took into account Shelley Family's face, so they only regarded him as a child who never properly grew up.

Marriott had received prior information that the young master would arrive at Sky Water City in three days. He thought that there wouldn't be an accident this time, but he didn't expect the young master to appear today. Moreover, he actually went to the dining hall and rudely ate and drank the food that wasn't meant for him.

Marriott turned to look at Zhao Hai, Zhao Hai seems to not be angry. He just looked at the young master, furthermore an amused expression could be seen from his eyes.

Hearing what Might said earlier, Marriott couldn't help but be thankful to him. He was very clear on the importance of Zhao Hai to the family. Now he only hoped that the young master would give Zhao Hai face and not act too rowdy. Otherwise, if Zhao Hai gets offended, it would be a huge loss for the family.

After listening to Might's introduction of Zhao Hai, 13th young master didn't say anything but the contempt inside his eyes could be clearly seen. In fact, he didn't even try to conceal it. He ignored all of Might's warnings and looked at Zhao Hai contemptuously, "Boy, did you come here thinking that the family will give you free food and drinks? Do you think my Shelley Family are fools?"

Zhao Hai looked at the young master and smiled faintly, "The Shelley Family certainly aren't fools since they wanted to partner with me. But a fool is definitely one who offends someone without any knowledge of what's going on."

13th young master complexion changed, even Might and Marriott's face changed. The two of them understood the young master's temperament, 13th young master absolutely wouldn't

allow anyone to give his face a slap. The two naturally heard Zhao Hai's irony that was directed at the young master. Zhao Hai basically said that he was not the fool but the young master was.

Sure enough, the young master's face immediately worsened. He looked at Zhao Hai and sneered, "Boy, I don't care who you are but do you believe that the Shelley Family will still keep on cooperating with you? Do you want to get chased down by the Family?"

Zhao Hai just smiled faintly and responded, "I don't believe, are you Shelley Family's patriarch? Do you have the authority? If the Shelley Family did stop their partnership with me because of your order, then it has nothing to do with me. The Shelley Family doesn't have anything worth for me anyway."

13th young master's face turned ugly, he didn't think that Zhao Hai would actually face him. He coldly looked at Zhao Hai, "Boy, do you understand what you're saying? From what you just said, it seems like it was my Shelley Family who actually reached out to make a partnership with you. Is this what you're implying?"

Zhao Hai smiled, "That is exactly what I am implying. It wasn't my intention to cooperate with the family anyway, it was them who reached out to me first. So I could say that I can stop cooperating with them at any time and look for another partner. Did I explain myself properly?"

13th young master's face was pale, he turned to Might and Marriott and furiously roared, "Did you hear what he said? Immediately kick him out of here!"

Might and Marriott could only share a stiff smile, they didn't make a move. Zhao Hai looked at this scene and found it funny. He turned to the young master and didn't say anything, he only wore an amused smile on his face clearly taunting the 13th young master.

13th young master looked at Might and Marriott and shouted,

“You won’t listen to me? Don’t forget that I’m a foreign affairs elder, I have the authority to command you. Do you dare defy the clan’s orders?”

A family didn’t necessarily have a foreign affairs elder, the matter of foreign affairs could be handed to any other member of a family. So this foreign affairs elder title of 13th young master was nothing but an empty title. However, just like what he said, he still has enough authority to command the two.

At this time, Might smiled bitterly and took a step, “13th young master, you haven’t contacted the family recently have you? The patriarch already removed your foreign affairs elder status. He also spread out the message that as long as someone see you, they should immediately take you home. Thus, you don’t have any authority to command us right now. Moreover, the family’s cooperation with mister Wales is of utmost importance. You won’t be able to destroy it.”

13th young master froze, then his face changed for the worse, he looked at Might and said, “Did father really revoke my position as foreign affairs elder? Mother didn’t prevent it?”

Might looked at 13th young master with a hint of pity on his eyes, Might was very clear that this young master in front of him hadn’t been in contact with the family these past few days. He has hidden himself, possibly because he knew that he was the cause of the feud with Grand Duke Lionheart, and his father would certainly not let him off. He tried as much as possible to not come in contact with people from the family, he only appeared recently because he may have ran out of money to spend.

When he hid before, the clan didn’t know of his whereabouts, but now that he has recently appeared, the clan had some people follow and secretly protect him. This was also the reason why Marriott knew that he would arrive at Sky Water City in three days. He just didn’t think that the young master would arrive early and was very eager to sabotage the family’s cooperation with Zhao

Hai.

It was precisely because of this hiding that the young master didn't know the happenings back in the family. Might originally wanted to wait for the 13th young master to arrive before telling him about what happened. But there was no need for it now, with the young master's temperament, if Might didn't interject now, it would really be possible for Zhao Hai and the family's cooperation to disintegrate, this would further add to their headache.

Might sighed and said, "13th young master, you should go home, you will know everything by then." Might naturally didn't want the internal matters of the family to spread. He wanted the young master to be rid off first to reduce having more problems. It would be better to inform him when they are alone.

However, the young master wasn't in such a mood, he yelled at Might and said, "Know what!? Now that I'm not a foreign affairs elder, you're not gonna listen to me anymore? Don't forget that you're a slave, a mutt that my Shelley Family raised."

Might's complexion changed, although he was a servant of Shelley Family, even the Family's Patriarch did not say such words to him. With an ugly face Might looked at the 13th young master and said, "Young master, the family has found out that your mother was sent to the family to destroy it from the inside. The businesses that you destroyed had some traces of you mother's hands in them. This time, your feud with Lionheart was found out to be instigated by your mother as well. In fact, your mother's clan and Lionheart's clan actually formed an alliance years ago to deal with my Shelley Family. Now, your mother's clan is already exterminated along with your mother. The reason why the family took a long time to deal with Grand Duke Lionheart is because they were already dealing with your mother's clan. The family had already removed your name from the registry and ordered for your capture so that you would get imprisoned back at the headquarters."

Chapter 355 – City Lord's Mansion

13th young master's face looked like an extinguished ember as he stared at blankly Might, then he said, "Impossible, how could the clan already know? I've been very successful these past few years. Why did this happen?"

Hearing the young master's words, Might couldn't help but sneer, "It seems like 13th young master already knew about his crimes, good, I'll report this to the family to save the young master from being interrogated. Maybe the family might even be more lenient to you."

The scene right now could only be described as a rollercoaster. Zhao Hai thought that the few words he said would really make his cooperation with Shelley Family collapse. He didn't think that the situation would actually take a dramatic turn, this was beyond his imaginations.

Marriott looked at Zhao Hai who was still smiling and apologized with a slight smile, "I really apologize for this situation, mister. Please wait for a moment while we prepare." Then he waved his hand as some people immediately came to take the 13th young master. The waiters at the side also cleaned the table and prepared the meals and drinks again.

Right behind Zhao Hai was Laura and the others who were very stunned. They didn't think that something like this would happen today. Like Zhao Hai, this was beyond their imagination.

While Zhao Hai sat down, Laura could only stand behind. Zhao Hai looked at Laura and the others then turned to Marriott, "Manager, can you arrange a meal for my people? No need to keep them here, just have them retreat; I know it must have been very hard for them these past days."

Marriott was already used to this situation so he didn't disagree. He smiled and said, "I've been very rude to mister's people, forgive

me.” Then he waved his hand as a waiter led Laura and the others to eat and rest.

Zhao Hai really disliked eating while Laura and the others just watch. This made his heart uneasy and apologetic, so he had them go to another place and rest.

Inside the dining hall, only Zhao Hai, Might, and Marriott were left. Might looked at Zhao Hai and smiled, “Mister isn’t angry?”

Zhao Hai smiled, “This matter isn’t worthy for me to get angry.”

Marriott smiled, “Mister is really good-natured. Mister might have not known, but you have greatly helped the family this time. Because Grand Duke Lionheart was very preoccupied in dealing with you, the family had the chance to take care of its other enemy. Now that the clan will start dealing with Grand Duke Luyen, I believe he wouldn’t be able to last much long.”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, “As long as someone isn’t an absolute idiot, they wouldn’t dare move against a family like Shelley family. Seeing how deep you family’s reserves were, how could the Grand Duke survive?”

Hearing this, Marriott appeared proud but quickly hid his expression. With a stiff smile he said, “To be honest, this time was actually quite dangerous for the family. We didn’t think that someone would send a woman to destroy us from the inside. Marrying a woman to our family, waiting for her to bear a child, then have the child destroy partnerships and businesses. This plot went on for decades undetected, it was very embarrassing.”

It was not only Marriott who felt it, when Zhao Hai heard Might’s words he couldn’t help but shiver. In order to destroy Shelley Family, 13th young master’s mother’s clan actually went to such degree. This was a very ridiculous amount effort put into such a plot.

Might turned to Zhao Hai and said, “Mister, didn’t you come this

time to seek cooperation with the Calci Family? Mister Wales, since you are a friend of mine, allow me to say something you might not want to hear. Your present strength isn't enough for the Calci Family to consider you for a cooperation, the qualifications that family needed is very high."

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile, "Don't worry, this time I came to Sky Water City to visit Calci Family with a letter from a mutual friend, they should at least consider me. I offended some people back at Aksu Empire, there's nowhere I could go but here."

Might and Marriott didn't say anything since this situation was too common. Offending a person of power in their country but not having the strength to fight back, so they plan to seek refuge at other countries. This scene wasn't rare in the continent, so the two people weren't very surprised.

Might can only look at Zhao Hai and ask, "Mister Wales, can I know who you managed to offend? If it's possible, the Shelley Family might be willing to solve this matter."

Zhao Hai looked at Might with a profound gaze, he faintly smiled and said, "Since we are partners, I don't want to hide the truth from you for a long time. The person I managed to offend back in Aksu Empire is Southern King."

Might and Marriott looked at each other and saw a trace of understanding from each other's eyes. They couldn't find any previous information about 'Wales' before. What they only knew was that he suddenly appeared and had gotten a title from Grand Duke Evan. Anything before that, they couldn't find anything which made them very confused.

However, after further monitoring, they couldn't help but associate Wales with the Dark Mage Zhao Hai from Purcell Duchy. Although Wales didn't use Dark element magic in front of people, some clues still gave it away. Adding all of these observations, they managed to finally get a concrete clue.

This time, Might asked Zhao Hai who his enemy was not only to inquire additional information about him but also to see whether he was really sincere in cooperating with the family.

For Great Families like them, forming partnerships couldn't just be casual. They must understand their collaborator, otherwise they might enter into unnecessary troubles.

This was also the reason why Shelley Family's inquiries about Zhao Hai's identity didn't stop, and it was only until now that they were fully convinced that Wales was the Dark Mage Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai's reply clearly made his identity known to the family. The two were also aware that Zhao Hai knew that they were testing him but still told them his identity, showing his trust in the family. However, they also heard that Zhao Hai not only offended Southern King but also the Radiant Church. Now wonder he wanted to seek refuge inside Sky Water City. This was because there was zero presence of the Radiant Church inside the city.

Marriott looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Please be assured, mister Wales. You will always be known as mister Wales."

Zhao Hai smiled and didn't say anything. He knew that Might and Marriott understood what he wants. At this time, the food and wine finally arrived and were served to the their table.

The guest was eating very happily with the hosts. Nobody was asking any further questions. Zhao Hai didn't ask about 13th young master's matters since it was Shelley Family's internal matter. At the same time, Might also didn't inquire about Dark Mage Zhao Hai anymore, Zhao Hai had already shown them enough sincerity. If they continue, then they would be acting in bad faith.

In the evening, Zhao Hai and his group rested inside the hotel. Although Ruyen was higher than Zhao Hai in terms of status, Ruyen didn't exist in the eyes of Might; to him, Zhao Hai was much more important. This also made Ruyen know that her status of Purcell Duchy's young lady meant absolutely nothing inside Rosen

Empire.

The next morning after Zhao Hai took his breakfast, he asked Might about the directions towards the City Lord's Mansion. He was planning on giving his respects to the City Lord today as well as deliver Bell's letter to him. Zhao Hai wanted to see how Sky Water City's city lord will receive him.

Sitting inside his bull-pulled carriage, Zhao Hai slowly travelled towards the center of the city. Zhao Hai calmly looked outside as shops and people passed by, but his heart wasn't as calm as his expression; he was thinking about what attitude the City Lord will use to meet him.

One must know that Zhao Hai wasn't a very influential person, so to the eyes of Calci Family, he may only be an ordinary member of the League of Dark Mages. Calci Family's influence inside the league was very enormous, the two's status was miles away from each other.

Laura also shared Zhao Hai's concerns and was also very nervous. This time they would meet the Calci Family, one of the pinnacle families inside the Continent. It was understandable for their hearts to feel uneasy.

It took more than an hour before their carriage reached the central part of the city. This time, along with Zhao Hai and Laura, there was also a person sent by Shelley Hotel to provide directions.

In front of the City Lord's Mansion, there was a large square paved with flat blue stones. The area was about a few thousand square meters and was very lively. There were pedestrians passing through as well as peddlers setting up their stalls. This scene made Zhao Hai anticipate his meeting with the Calci Family. He thought that the Calci family was really a good family to have the magnanimity to allow stalls to be erected here.

There were no people in the place several hundred square meters in front of the City Lord Mansion's front gate. And it could also be

seen that there were no stalls there.

The carriage slowly parked in front the the City Lord's Mansion. The front gate was very tall, more than five meters high. There was also a giant piece of horizontal tablet about that had the letters "City Lord's Mansion" written on it. In the place above , the Calci Family's insignia was carved. The family's insignia was a magic staff surrounded by mists.

The insignia was very simple, but this symbol was very famous all throughout the continent. It was because the magic staff shown was the Calci Family's heirloom treasure passed down from generation to generation, the Dark Scepter.

Just by listening to its name one would feel like it is very imposing, and it is indeed very formidable. This staff was a treasure for Dark Mages, it was said that it could amplify Dark element spells by about 50 percent as well as reduce the amount of time needed to cast it by also 50 percent. Seeing these two functions, one couldn't help but feel that this magic staff is very fierce.

In the midst of a Mage battle, these advantages were very important. If your magic was a second faster than the enemy, this meant that you can attack the other party first which gave you initiative. This made the Dark Scepter a very famous treasure in the continent. At the same time, it was because of this scepter that the ancestors of Calci Family were able to rack up huge contributions to the Rosen Empire and lay the foundation for the entire family.

Chapter 356 – Smith

After the carriage stopped, Zhao Hai and the others got off from the vehicle. There were two guards standing right by the mansion's front gate. The two wore chainmail armor and wore stiff faces as they just stood there motionless. They looked just like sets of armors placed there.

From the square towards the front gate of mansion, there were a total of 20 steps. Zhao Hai slowly walked toward the front gate attracting attention from both pedestrians and peddlers.

Zhao Hai didn't care about the gazes of these people and continued towards the mansion's front gate. The two guards didn't move as though they didn't notice Zhao Hai. This made Zhao Hai a bit confused, but he still went forward and used the knocker on the mansion's gate.

After two knocks, Zhao Hai stopped, then the gate opened as a young male servant came from inside. He looked at Zhao Hai and gave him a salute, "What does Mister need?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "A friend had me send this letter to the City Lord. I'll have to trouble you to hand this to him." Then he handed the letter that Bell wrote.

The young man received the letter, and when he looked at it his expression changed. He immediately opened the gate and said, "Mister, please let me welcome you to the reception hall. This one will immediately deliver your letter." Then the servant left Zhao Hai at the mansion's reception room.

Upon entering the mansion's premises, only then did Zhao Hai understand how huge the City Lord's mansion was. After entering the gate, you will see a separate house which acted as a reception area for people who'll come and visit. Behind the row of houses was a courtyard, but there was nobody there right now. Right after the field was the main house. There was a sign hung outside but he

couldn't read it at this time. What he knew, however, was how big the mansion was, the land it was on was almost as large as the square outside.

Zhao Hai entered the reception room, the room was actually very good. Inside was a complete tea set, while the walls were decorated with various calligraphies as well as paintings. After he came inside, the man immediately had someone serve Zhao Hai the tea, then immediately withdrew back, everything seem to be going along the proper customs.

When Zhao Hai saw this scene, he couldn't help but nod secretly. Looking at the servants' performance, as well as the customs of Calci Family, he knew how educated the people inside the mansion were. Quite fitting for a Family placed at the pinnacle among others in the continent.

Zhao Hai calmed down and sat quietly inside the reception room while drinking tea. He didn't become uneasy regarding the City Lord's Mansion. He already did what he could, all that happens later on will depend on the Calci Family.

When Zhao Hai was about to start drinking his second cup of tea, footsteps could be heard outside the room. Then the male servant who received Zhao Hai appeared after opening the door. At the side of this servant was an old man that looked to be between 60 to 70 years old. The silk clothing that the man wore was very well managed, it didn't have any creases in it, his hair was combed very well, he seemed to be very meticulous.

He wore a very serious face that looked like he was in total concentration. His face was full of wrinkles and he had some amount of gray hair. Despite these, his eyes were full of vitality and seemed to be shining.

Zhao Hai quickly stood up as the old man looked towards Zhao Hai and said, "Greetings Mister. I am the city lord's assistant, the City Lord asked me to invite mister over."

Zhao Hai bowed as well and said, "I'll have to trouble mister." Then he followed the old man.

As the two of them went out of the reception room, Zhao Hai spotted the male servant heading outside the mansion. This made Zhao Hai relieved, it seemed like the servant would arrange somewhere for Laura and the others to stay.

The assistant was a very serious person, he didn't say a word to Zhao Hai as they walked towards the main mansion.

Zhao Hai also took the time to evaluate the City Lord's Mansion. The building closest to the gate was the reception hall, it was right next to the courtyard. After walking further, there was a martial art arena and there were people currently practicing inside. After passing the arena, there was another building with a sign on it that said "Steward's Hall."

Crossing the steward's hall, there was another gate towards the interior part of the City Lord's Mansion. After entering the gate, you were again met with another training field where warriors could be seen training. Behind the field was a building with a sign that said, "Secretariat". After passing that building, there was a small courtyard, but this time there was nobody practicing here. Inside, there was a fountain pond with flowers nearby; the place looked very silent and tranquil.

Behind the small square was a small building. The building looked like a villa, it was very beautiful.

The old man didn't stop and immediately took Zhao Hai towards the small building. The first floor of the building was huge office, it was divided into two sections; one is for proper office use while the other one was used for receiving guests. Inside the reception area, there was a middle aged man standing there.

The figure of the middle-aged man wasn't tall, he looked very thin and weak. But this person was very stylish, he dressed very well.

The person had black hair, white skin, a square but small face. His features were very pronounced and gave anyone a sense of authority whenever they look at him. It was impossible for any other person to not see the feeling of imposingness just by looking at this man.

The old man walked towards the middle-aged person and said, "City Lord, this is Mister Zhao Hai."

The man was looking at Zhao Hai while he listened to the old man's words. He nodded his head and said to Zhao Hai, "Welcome to Sky Water City, Mister Zhao Hai has tired himself by coming here, please sit down."

Zhao Hai hastily bowed and said, "Zhao Hai sees the City Lord, the City Lord is too polite." Then he took a seat.

The City Lord also sat down, he sized up Zhao Hai and said, "I have already read Bell's letter. And since mister is someone from our own side, I won't be polite and ask why did mister come here? Tell me anything that you need. Also, don't call me City Lord, I'm Smith Calci, just call me Brother Smith."

Zhao Hai didn't think that Smith would be very polite, he quickly replied, "Of course, Brother Smith, also you don't need to call me mister any more, just call me Zhao Hai, little Hai is also good. Brother Smith should know of my present situation, I don't have any means to stay inside Aksu Empire anymore. Even other countries are not safe because of the Radiant Church, I feel that they would go to all ends just to chase after me. Therefore I can only go to Brother Smith and hope that Brother would provide me refuge."

Hearing what Zhao Hai said, Smith couldn't help but laugh, "Brother is too polite, you're with the league so naturally i'll treat you like a true brother. You shouldn't be very polite with me. Right, are you staying at Shelley Hotel? If you're asking me for help, then how could I make you stay at Shelley Hotel? How about

this, you and your people stay here in the mansion, what do you think?”

Zhao Hai didn't think that Smith would actually have him stay inside the City Lord's Mansion. To be honest, he felt that he couldn't bear Smith's enthusiasm, he quickly said, “It's too much trouble. I think I'm better staying outside, I'll just find a place to stay. How could I trouble Brother Smith?”

Smith showed a faint smile and said, “You're being too polite, how could a big house such as this not have some place for you? Listen to me, go back and pack your things to move in right away. Ah, you don't need to do that, Uncle Phil, go send someone to do that. To be more convenient, tell the people from the hotel that Little Hai is my brother, so I had him move inside the mansion.”

The old man who led Zhao Hai was apparently named Phil. He gave a nod then turned to exit the office. Zhao Hai didn't think Smith would be very swift, he didn't even have an opportunity to refuse.

Zhao Hai could only force a smile. Smith turned to Zhao Hai and said, “Little Hai, didn't you also come here to do business? Bell said that you have good products in your hand? What are they?”

Zhao Hai stared, then he smiled, “I have a lot of products on hand, but if we're talking about good products, then I only have a few. One of them are my Haven products. I think Brother Smith should have heard of them?” Although Haven products hadn't reached Rosen Empire and only existed inside Aksu Empire's Purcell Duchy, Zhao Hai thought that with Calci Family's information network, it would be impossible for them to not know of it.

Smith smiled and replied, “I have, but just those couldn't be considered as a good business. What else do you have?”

Zhao Hai smiled, “There is also the milk wine that I'm supplying Shelley Hotel, its high quality milk wine.” As he said that, he

turned his hand as he placed a couple of liquor bags on the table. Then he continued, “This milk wine used the beastmen’s method to ferment but I added my own methods to improve it. This is much better than the Fruit Wine the people in the continent consumes. Also, this is a strong liquor, it only takes a small cup to make any average person drunk. From what I know, this is the only liquor of its type in the entire continent; it’s a unique product. Currently, I have a partnership with Bell and Shelley Hotel for this product. I supply Bell with 1,000 jin per month while Shelley Hotel gets 10,000 jin. Does Brother Smith want to taste?”

Smith looked at the liquor bags on the table. He saw they were the most common liquor bags used by the beastmen. Calci Family controls the entire Sky Water City. This was the most famous port inside Rosen Empire, so it was natural that there were also a lot of ships that sail from here to the Beastman Prairie and vice versa. At the same time, Calci Family also had a lot of ships sailing to and from the prairie, so Smith naturally had seen this kind of liquor bag a lot.

Zhao Hai looked at Smith calmly. He took out some Milk Wine to test Smith. He wanted to see whether Smith would dare drink the wine that he brought.

From the moment he met Smith, Smith was very enthusiastic. Although his enthusiasm was great, Zhao Hai couldn’t help but be a bit skeptical. Smith allowed him to stay inside the City Lord’s Mansion which was also Smith’s place. Zhao Hai thought that making him stay inside the mansion was not only for protecting him, but also for monitoring him.

If Smith was not suspicious of him, then he would certainly drink Zhao Hai’s liquor. If he was, then he wouldn’t drink the liquor.

Smith took the liquor bag and carefully looked at it, he nodded and said, “This is certainly beastman craftsmanship. Little Hai, do you have business with some beastmen back in the prairie?” At the same time, Smith opened the lid and directly poured the drink into

his mouth.

Seeing Smith drink the wine, Zhao Hai's heart couldn't help but loosen. It seems that Smith really believes him. But as soon as he saw the liquor bag that Smith was holding, he knew that something bad was going to happen.

Fortunately, his movement was quick enough. When Smith poured the liquor in his mouth, he felt his mouth were on fire so he immediately spat out the liquor. If Zhao Hai was slow, he will certainly meet the spit at face value. This was the main reason why Zhao Hai decided to get out of the way, he saw from the liquor bag that the milk wine that Smith took was the one with the highest degree of alcohol.

While holding the liquor bag, Smith was coughing again and again. He didn't imagine that this wine would be strong to such a degree that as soon as it reached his mouth, it seemed like he was swallowing charcoal, it was too fierce.

Zhao Hai immediately picked up a tea pot and poured Smith a cup of tea and at the same time taking the liquor bag from Smith's hands. Smith wasn't polite and immediately drank the tea to make himself feel better

When he finally managed to somewhat recover, he looked at the liquor bag in Zhao Hai's hand in fear and turned to Zhao Hai, "I must say, Little Hai, are you sure that's alcohol? Isn't that poison?"

Zhao Hai laughed and said, "Brother Smith, I wouldn't drink this wine like that. This wine is very strong. Even the Beastmen who were famous for their alcohol tolerance can't drink that much. This wine had to be drank slowly. And also, the bag you drank contained the strongest liquor of the batch. The other bags aren't as strong as this one. Want to give them another try?"

Zhao Hai usually didn't talk like this to people he met for the first time. But it was surprising that Smith and him didn't have any

sense of being strangers with each other. The two seem to know each other for a long time. After seeing Smith drink his liquor, Zhao Hai wholeheartedly took Smith as a friend.

Shaking his head, Smith replied, "Forget it, it is too strong. I can't stand it. But this wine is truly very unique, its very great business. Good, I will support you. If you need a store, or some business connections, just tell me and I'll help you."

Zhao Hai couldn't help but get moved as he listened to Smith. He currently didn't have any connections as well as a place to sell his products, but Smith actually helped him solve these two problems. Who wouldn't be moved with such gesture?

However, Zhao Hai also knew the quantity he had on his hands. He shook his head regretfully and said, "Unfortunately we don't have enough to sell massively. Although this liquor is good, the amount I could produce wouldn't be able to meet the demand. We still need for quite some time before we could provide massive supply"

Smith nodded and said, "Do you have anything else? Show me and maybe I can help you."

Zhao Hai also nodded, "There is, this one is rations. These rations were something meat that the beastmen air dried and seasoned to be used in times of battle. I'm going to have these rations sent to the continent and sell it to mercenaries. Brother Smith, do you think that this is feasible?"

Chapter 357 – Sweet Plum Courtyard

Smith was stunned. He knew about rations since the Calci Family would frequently come in contact with Beastmen. He knew that beastmen would get into wars very often, and while they do so they would also make rations; so Smith was very familiar with them.

He actually didn't think that Zhao Hai would want to sell these rations in the continent. However, his idea was worth trying. Mercenary food was quite monotonous, so if they were served rations, they might take a liking to it.

But Smith still frowned and said, "Little Hai, these rations are made of argali and those are also very valuable in the continent. Making them into rations seems to be quite wasteful."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "Actually, my rations aren't all made from Argali. Although I have some business inside the prairie, the amount of argali I have isn't that much. Aside from argali, my rations are also made from Blue Eyed Rabbit meat. You should know that Blue Eyed Rabbit meat don't sell very well in the continent, so I made them into rations."

Smith replied, "Blue Eyed Rabbit? This is new to me, aren't Blue Eyed rabbits generally used to make canned food? Did you try doing that?"

Zhao Hai smiled, "I did, but the amount of blue eyed rabbits that I have is quite a lot. They wouldn't be able to be made into canned food, so I made them into rations. Also, I don't want to sell entire blue eyed rabbits since I need their skin for myself."

Smith smiled and said, "Let's go along your plan. Selling these rations can make those mercenaries remember us, whether it was you or my Calci Family."

Zhao Hai nodded, "But this way, there is another problem. We

need to deal with those rabbit skins and I also need to sell some wool products. What do you think about this Brother Smith?”

Smith waved his hand and said, “You don’t need to worry about these things. I’ll take care of it. You still need to spend some time to get used to the statistics of your business and also see who you can sell your stuff to. If you have any problems, don’t hesitate to approach me.”

Zhao Hai smiled, “I will, but Brother Smith, I’m very curious, why are you treating me this well when we only had met for the first time?”

Smith looked at Zhao Hai and sighed, “For you, it’s because you deserve it. We, the League of Dark Mages, have always been at a disadvantage in our confrontations with the Radiant Church. Especially in the recent years, we always had come with losses with our bouts with them. We think that it is because of our lack of information about the church. The intel you provided some time ago was very important to the league, it made us vent out and feel better.”

Now Zhao Hai knew why. No wonder Smith was extremely polite to him. The reason was actually this.

From what he understood from Smith’s words, the Calci Family considers the League of Dark Mage as their own family. They cherish the league, therefore they can feel this much gratitude to him.

Zhao Hai thought that there was nothing wrong with this. Calci Family could be said to be the strongest dark mage family in the entire continent. The rise and fall of their family was interlinked with the fate of Dark element magic. Therefore, they couldn’t bear see the profession of Dark Mage die down, for this reason they set-up the League of Dark Mages.

However, since they were also Dark Mages, they knew that Dark Mages don’t like someone being their superiors. So they set the

league up to be a loose alliance and gave it a very relaxed atmosphere. Sure enough, they managed to succeed with this model, they managed to have Dark Mages and other people join to help each other. As to dealing with the Radiant Church? There was no need for them to deliberately take action, after all, Dark Mages already consider the Radiant church as their number 1 enemy.

Zhao Hai looked at Smith and showed a faint smile, “My enmity with the Radiant Church is very deep. This time, on the prairie, I managed to slay a 9th level expert of the church. The intel I got was from that 9th rank.”

Smith stared blankly, he didn’t know that Zhao Hai had managed to kill a 9th rank expert of the Radiant Church. This information gave him a shock, he looked at Zhao Hai and said, “Did you really kill a church’s 9th rank expert?”

Zhao Hai nodded, “Yes, a 9th rank Fire element Mage, one of the successful products of their Ultimate Weapon program. This time, the church extended their hand towards the Cow-headed race and cooperated with the Fighting Bull clan to defeat the Herculean Bull clan. I gave the Herculean Bulls a helping hand, not only did we manage to extinguish the Fighting Bulls, we also killed the church’s 9th rank expert as well as a Herculean Bull spy working for the church. Now, I’m currently the Cow-headed race’s crown prince.”

Smith was once again stunned, the Calci Family had already been doing business with the beastmen for many years. But being a prince of a beastman race? How could human get that status?

Smith was initially hospitable to Zhao Hai since the latter helped the League of Dark Mages solve a few matters and also because of Bell’s letter. Bell praised Zhao Hai very much in his letter, so Smith decided to treat Zhao Hai well.

But Smith didn’t imagine that Zhao Hai would continually give him surprises. First was his business, his views and ideas were very

good for business. This was especially true when he heard that there are only two other parties that supplied the milk wine. At this time, Smith felt his blood pumping and his body turning warm.

Smith was very clear about the proportion of profits unique businesses could bring in, and it was very high. Moreover, he was also a person who looked at the bigger picture, therefore he accepted this business but asked if Zhao Hai had any other products. He wanted to see whether there was avenue for another good business, he wanted to see what other ideas Zhao Hai might have.

Soon after, the business idea came about. When he heard the proposal, Smith felt puzzled because the business sounded very common and too ordinary that it looked like there was no special characteristics to it at all.

However, after Zhao Hai talked about the mercenaries as customers, Smith knew what Zhao Hai's business target was. The mercenaries in the continent, as a whole, represented a force that couldn't be underestimated.

Although the strength of mercenaries were commonly very small. Smith couldn't just underestimate their capabilities. These great families have information networks among those mercenaries; they knew how terrifying mercenaries could be when they group up.

But although they are quite terrifying, they have low level of efficacy. So if they provide them with rations, which could be considered as a special type of food, it would be a great help to the mercenaries. No other business could provide this much help to the mercenaries.

And lastly, Zhao Hai revealed that he was also a Crown Prince of the Herculean Bull clan. This was the information that hit Smith the hardest. A Beastman race's Crown Prince held a very high

status inside the Prairie. No matter what race you are, as long as you are a race's crown prince, even a Warring Clan would accept you with courteous hospitality, this was what this status represented.

But not to even say being a prince, even being a clan member of a Beastman race was a very difficult thing to do. This was because beastmen generally didn't trust humans, so it was close to impossible for a human to be a beastman's clan member.

And a Crown Prince, how difficult would it be for a human to become one? Smith almost didn't want to think about it, he looked at Zhao Hai and didn't know what to say.

Seeing Smith's appearance, Zhao Hai knew what the other was thinking. He just smiled and continued, "Brother Smith, to tell you the truth, I'm not only the Crown Prince of the Herculean Bull Clan, I also hold friendship flags from the Big-bellied Pig Clan as well as the Giant-horned Bull Clan. You see that magic beast pulling my carriage? That is the Giant-Horned Bull's relative beast, I also have the Fighting Bull's relative beast as well as the Herculean Bull's. On the beastman prairie, I can confidently say that I won't be attacked by other beastmen. Hehe."

Smith stared blankly at Zhao Hai, this news was very big. They didn't think that Zhao Hai had such capabilities and wouldn't be attacked by the Beastmen at all. This was a dream for every Human merchant.

Smith recovered after some time, then he turned to Zhao Hai and asked, "Brother, can I know what these friendship flags that you were talking about?"

Hearing Smith ask him, Zhao Hai knew that Smith didn't have any idea what a friendship flag was. After all, Beastmen wouldn't give humans their friendship flags. But he didn't want to hide the truth from Smith, so he immediately explained to Smith what a friendship flag was.

Smith understood that the flag that their clan acquired before was just an ordinary flag, it was no use at all.

The two chatted for a while, Smith got a new understanding of the matters between Beastmen. At this time, Phil came in and said to Smith and Zhao Hai, “Master, Mister Wales, the food is ready. Please take a seat at the dining hall.”

Smith stood up hastily along with Zhao Hai, “Little Hai, let’s go, come taste the food of my mansion’s chefs. Uncle Phil, are Little Hai’s baggages taken care of?”

Phil bowed and said, “It has been brought in and placed inside Sweet Plum Courtyard. Mister’s servants were also sent to the courtyard.”

Smith nodded, then turned to Zhao Hai and said, “You’ll be staying inside Sweet Plum Courtyard from now on. Your people have also been sent there. That is an independent courtyard and is the farthest from the main house. That courtyard will be for your use and yours alone. If you need me for something go tell me or Uncle Phil. Uncle Phil watched me grow up, he has my utmost trust. If you need anything just tell him and he’ll help you.”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, “Good, I’ll remember it. Brother doesn’t need to worry about it anymore.” After talking, they headed towards the mansion’s dining hall. The dining hall of the City Lord’s mansion was placed in the middle of all the courtyards. The hall was very large, there was a place for ordinary people to eat, a place for the family to eat, a place for elders to eat, and lastly also a place for guests to eat.

Chapter 358 – Megan

The room that they were in right now was the place where guests would dine in. Here, there were individual compartments to eat your meals, one could also order their own dishes, in contrast to ordinary people where their meals were always set.

After eating in the dining hall, Phil took Zhao Hai directly towards Sweet Plum Courtyard where he was going to stay in. Sweet Plum Courtyard was named after its famous Sweet Plum garden, which houses all kinds of sweet plums. At this time, it was the season for the plums to bloom, filling the entire courtyard with a pleasant fragrance.

Although Zhao Hai was admitted to Sweet Plum Courtyard, Ruyen wasn't invited and she just stayed inside Shelley Hotel. However, Zhao Hai still took measures for her to be taken care of.

When Zhao Hai had finished eating his meal and headed to Sweet Plum Courtyard, Laura and the others were already waiting for him inside a room of their new residence. In addition to the sweet plum garden, the courtyard also had a small area in front of the main house. The entire yard could fit about 100 people, it was not a small courtyard.

After entering the room, Zhao Hai saw Laura and the others sitting inside. Their expression were full of worries when they saw Zhao Hai enter. Laura and the others immediately stood up as Laura asked, "Brother Hai, what's all this about? Why did they send us here?"

Zhao Hai looked at Laura's worried face, he smiled and answered, "No need to be worried, we'll start living here from now on. This is something Brother Smith prepared for us." Then he told Laura and the others about his meeting with Smith today.

Listening to Zhao Hai's story, Laura and the others were stunned. But Laura immediately wore a happy expression, she turned to

Zhao Hai and said, “Brother Hai, aren’t you worried that Smith arranged for us to stay here so that he could monitor our movements?”

Zhao hai showed a faint smiled and said, “Isn’t it good if he watched over us? This way, we can make him more willing to cooperate with us. He will not doubt us, which would be very beneficial for our cause.”

Laura and the others stared blankly, but they immediately understood what Zhao Hai meant. Laura embarrassingly said, “So Brother Hai meant that initially, hehe, now I understand.”

Zhao Hai smiled, “Good, in the following two days, we should see the statistics of our products, how much grain we can make, as well as the production for our milk wine and rations. Then we’ll inform Grandpa Green to ramp up our productions. I’ll go and see Ruyen’s situation, as soon as Uncle Evan arrives here, Ruyen could immediately board their ship.”

Laura smiled, “Making Ruyen go home is also one of our worries. Right, Brother Hai, it’s currently early winter, there’s little business in the prairie. How about we go see the other nations?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, “I also think so, but now is not good. It’s best if we stabilize our business here. We need to get our shop outside set up as soon as possible.”

Laura nodded, “That’s also good. In the next two days, we’ll see our inventory and have our productions set-up.”

Zhao Hai also nodded, “I didn’t think that it would be this smooth. With Brother Smith’s help, we now have a lot of things on our hand that we can work on. Also, it’s the best time to visit the slave market, want to come and see?”

Laura agreed, “That’s a great idea, what we lack the most are skilled people. Although we brought a lot of beastmen slaves, those slaves have zero experience in planting crops. This matter is a very

big problem, so it's best if we go find additional human slaves, especially those who have skills and are literate."

Zhao Hai nodded, "Right, we have too low of a population in our territory. Our territory isn't that much smaller than the entire Aksu Empire, but the amount of people inside are really too few. Even if we improve the land now, there would be no people to work on it."

These days, Zhao Hai had always been thinking about his territory. In addition to the Black Wasteland, there was still the Carrion Fog which Cai'er could use to expand their territory. But currently, even if he improves all of this land, the hands that could work on it were really too few.

Presently, the amount of people he had was enough to farm the existing fields. But with the increasing amount of factories that they would build, the amount of people who could plant crops would get lesser and lesser. It was very fortunate that it's currently winter, so there was no need to plant crops outside.

At this time, there was a sudden burst of noise coming from outside. This made Zhao Hai and the others stare, this courtyard was arranged for them by Smith. It was very strange for someone to come in. What is this all about?

Zhao Hai's expression changed, he turned to Shun and said, "Shun take a look and see what's happening, and make sure to don't offend anyone." Shun nodded and opened the door to head outside.

Megan liked the plum blossoms since she was a child, so Sweet Plum courtyard became her most favorite place to visit. If it wasn't for Sweet Plum courtyard being too far, she would have already moved in here.

Since it's the beginning beginning parts of winter, the sweet plums were on their full blossom inside the garden. Megan got a few friends together and visited the garden. Along the way, they

were drinking a few cups of warmed up wine as they were chatting about matters in the continent.

The City Lord's Mansion's Sweet Plum Courtyard was very famous inside Sky Water City. This courtyard had the largest Plum Garden in the entire city. When it is early winter, it was the best time to come and see the scenery. Many noble young ladies and young gentlemen would come visit Sweet Plum courtyard to appreciate the garden throughout the year, but it was always better with a little snow on the ground.

Megan had two servants by her side. In order to not disturb the front yard, they came in to the courtyard via the backdoor. This was not only to minimize the disturbance, but this was also the closest way towards the plum garden.

Megan's servant opened the door to the courtyard and the group went in and headed towards the plum garden. But at this moment, Megan felt that something was different about the courtyard.

Before this day, Megan didn't have anyone clean the courtyard, so the place should look quite messy. But now, the yard was very clean, it seems like it had been cleaned by someone, she just didn't know why.

One could say that Megan's itinerary became quite soured. In her mind, sugar plum courtyard with a bit of dead leaves and twigs contrasting with the elegant garden, two different facades, was very beautiful.

But now, the courtyard has been tidied up, the ground was swept and the waters were cleaned, Meg felt very confused.

At this time, the door to the courtyard's main house opened, then a shadow of a small and thin warrior wearing leather armor suddenly appeared and stared at them with his naturally cold eyes.

The young ladies and young gentlemen who came with Meg quietly stood in place. They all looked at the thin figure, everybody

was very silent.

The person who came out was naturally Shun. Shun understood what Zhao Hai meant, he doesn't want to stir up unnecessary trouble, so he told Shun to not offend anyone when he comes out.

Shun looked at the young gentlemen and ladies and groaned a bit inside. Then he looked at Megan who didn't understand what was going on.

Shun saw that Megan and the other ladies were mostly carrying hand warmers while the young men were wearing thick soft beastkin clothes. Each and every one of them were dressed beautifully. At their back were a lot of servants, some servants were carrying food boxes while the others were carrying some charcoal stoves, the group looked very lively.

After taking a look at them, Shun understood that Megan should be the daughter of the city lord and had her other friends come over and visit the sweet plum garden. He wasn't surprised about any of this, after all, when they arrived here, he went around and performed some scouting all around the courtyard. Right nearby the back door, there was a small area that was very near to the garden where people could go and enjoy the scenery. Looking at Megan's entourage, Shun immediately understood what they were doing.

Shun bowed towards the group and said, "This one has seen young lady Megan. This one is my young master Wales' servant. Today, the young master came to visit the City Lord and came to be bestowed this Sweet Plum Courtyard to settle in. I have to ask the young lady to forgive me."

Shun's words were very attractive, but it also went straight to the point. It was informing Megan that Zhao Hai's group were invited by the city lord and did not break in. He also politely asked Megan and his group that they could leave.

Megan stared, then with a confused look she asked Shun, "Are

you really father's guests?"

Shun quickly replied, "I'll have to be honest to the young lady. The only guest of the city lord is my young master, I'm just the young master's servant."

When he had just finished speaking, Zhao Hai's voice could be heard, "Alright Shun, no need to say these. We were the one who originally disturbed the young lady, the young lady can come visit anytime she wants."

Shun nodded and turned to Megan and said, "I apologize to the young lady. Please continue on, we'll just have to rest inside the house."

Shun's lowered attitude made Megan embarrassed. The young men and ladies who came with her also felt embarrassed, Megan hurriedly said, "Since that is so, I and the others won't disturb mister's rest. We'll be excusing ourselves."

As she was about to leave, a female voice came, "Miss, please stay." Then Laura came out of the door, Shun bowed to Laura and then went behind her.

Laura bowed and said, "The young lady doesn't need to leave. Just like the young master said, we were the ones who intruded inside the City Lord's Mansion, so how could we let the young lady leave? I invite the young lady and her friends to the plum gardens, we won't be disturbing your visit."

Hearing Laura's words, Megan became even more embarrassed, she quickly responded, "Then wouldn't we be disturbing your group's rest?"

Laura smiled and said, "It was my young master who disturbed the lady's visit to the plum garden, and he also asked me to invite you. Right, this is some strong liquor that the young master wanted to gift the young miss. It's quite fierce but I guarantee that it is very pleasant."

Then she gave the liquor bag to Shun as the latter handed off the bag towards Megan's servant, then he turned back.

Chapter 359 – Plum Blossom Princess

After handing off the liquor to Megan's servant, Shun returned to Laura's side. Laura bowed towards Megan and said, "This one wouldn't bother the young lady and her friends anymore." Then she smiled towards Megan and headed back towards the house, Shun naturally followed her back.

Megan was surprised to see what just happened. They were some of the less influential children of their families, or those who were not that valued by the direct line, thus they didn't have much experience. They hadn't experienced this kind of situation before so it's good that they now knew what they should do.

It took long for Megan to respond, she glanced at the closed door then bit her teeth as she turned to the group and said, "Let's go, we'll head to sweet plum garden."

The people looked at Megan as if they didn't understand what she just said. In their opinion, they should just leave the courtyard, this was basic courtesy of a noble.

Megan glanced at her friends and said, "The gentleman had already given us a bag of wine. We don't want to disappoint the mister's good graces either right? So let's go, let's head to sweet plum garden."

When the group heard what Ruyen said, they all thought for a moment then they cheered up and followed Megan towards the garden. They couldn't wait to enjoy the scenery of the garden.

Hearing Megan's group cheering, Zhao Hai smiled and didn't say anything. He held his cup and took a sip of his tea. Zhao Hai really liked the taste of milk tea, it tastes like Zhao Hai's most favorite tea. It tastes lighter than dark tea, but since there was milk inside, it feels very good in the mouth. Zhao Hai loved it very much.

Laura looked at Zhao Hai and couldn't help but smile, "Brother

Hai, is it really okay to give those wine to them? Those are 10 jins of strong liquor.”

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile and said, “Wouldn’t it be better if they drank it? They could advertise it for us.”

Laura’s smile became brighter, this was because she knew that this wasn’t good advertisement, she clearly knew that Zhao Hai was just pranking them.

Megan and her group arrived at the plum garden and they immediately had their servants prepare the cloth to spread around the small square. Then the charcoal stove was lit and the servants prepared the kettle to warm some wine on the stove. At the same time, the table was also filled with several small dishes, but it was clear to those in attendance that these dishes were only meant for decoration, nobody will eat these.

Currently, nobody present was in the mood to enjoy the plum garden. Their interest was preoccupied by the liquor bag on the servant’s hand.

These people weren’t in contact with their clan’s businesses, therefore, most of them simply haven’t seen a beastman liquor bag before. So when the servant presented the leather-made bag, the group became very curious.

Megan knew what they were thinking, She looked at the liquor bag in her servant’s hand and nodded, “This should be a beastman’s milk wine. It seems like we are going to taste a fresh one today, go warm the wine up.”

The servant immediately complied, then carefully poured the wine to the kettle then placed it on the charcoal stove. Megan looked at the liquor bag surprised as she said, “That’s not right. I remember that milk wine should have a creamy color. How can this wine be transparent?”

A young lady at her side also nodded, “Yeah, I used to drink milk

wine back at home. The liquor was milky and looked like goat's milk. But this one looks like water, are you sure this isn't water?"

However, it was clear that nobody believed it to be so because soon enough the scent of wine came out from the kettle. There were several young men who couldn't help but sniff the wine, one of them said, "This wine is very fragrant, this is the first time I smelled such pleasant fragrance. Now I'm curious as to how it tastes."

Several people nodded. They also smelled the wine and the wine was indeed very fragrant. Currently, there was a strange scene inside the garden's square, everyone was looking at the kettle and not even sparing attention to the blooming plums around.

Before long, the kettle had warmed, then the servant immediately served each person a cup. The group impatiently drank the liquor, and no matter whether they were men or women, they immediately coughed continuously, their faces were extremely red.

When the group recovered, the young ladies couldn't help but placed their wine cups down. They looked at the wine with a bit of fear. However, the young men didn't let go of their wine, they relished the experience and took small sips of the liquor.

It didn't matter whether it was strong or not; they couldn't stop drinking. The taste of the wine was really good. Especially during this wintertime where this fragrant warm glass of wine was a very welcome beverage.

The young men couldn't help but drink a couple more cups. When the young ladies saw the men, they eventually overcame their hesitation and learned to take sips like the young men. Soon they managed to place a cup of wine on their stomachs.

High alcohol content wines have their own characteristic. After drinking it, the person would feel heat all over their body. After taking her sip, Megan could feel her body heating up. Although the

weather was cold, the group was already currently sweating.

Another characteristic of wine was that the more you drink, the more you feel like drinking more. The feeling of faintness and dizziness was really amazing.

The servants felt that something was wrong. Their young masters and ladies seemed to turn into drunkards and kept pouring liquor to their mouths. Soon afterwards, the 10 jins of liquor that Zhao Hai gave eventually ran out. Looking at these young men and women, their faces were very red and they had a very dizzied expressions.

The servants immediately escorted them home. When they reached the courtyard's door, Shun was already there who just silently looked at them while smiling.

Shun was very clear to the strength of their wine. Not to mention these young nobles who didn't drink wine on their own, even old drunkards in the continent probably would also get drunk from drinking this much wine. The degree of that wine isn't something to joke about.

At this time, Shue arrived and looked at Shun, "What's this?"

Shun smiled, "They're drunk, it's young master's advertising plan. When these people come home, they should become the best type of advertisement for the wine." Then the two of them revealed a sly grin.

Early next morning, Megan opened her eyes and looked around for a while and saw that she was in her room. She stood up but couldn't help but stagger. She sat up and was puzzled, worn in her body were her sleeping clothes, this was normal but she felt that something was wrong.

While she was puzzled, she suddenly saw a person lying underneath her bed. This was her own maid. The maid wore a neat dress and had also fallen asleep.

Megan suddenly felt her mouth turn dry, she nudged her maid and said, “Little May, Little May. Give me water.”

Little May was naturally the girl who was sleeping just below her bed. When the girl heard Megan’s calls, she immediately woke up. She happily looked at Megan and said, “Miss, you’re awake! Great! Wait a moment, I’ll go bring you some water immediately.”

The Little May ran up to a table and poured Megan a glass of water from a canteen. The canteen was wrapped with leather, so the water inside wasn’t too cold and was very suitable for drinking.

Megan drank the water and felt a bit better. She turned to May, “Little May, what happened to me? When did I fall asleep? How come I can’t remember?”

May looked at Megan’s appearance, she knew why Megan couldn’t remember anything. She quickly responded, “Miss, you really can’t remember? Yesterday, you and Miss Holly along with the others went to plum garden to enjoy yourselves. Then you drank the liquor that Mister Wales gave and got drunk off of it. yesterday , you didn’t eat dinner and immediately went to sleep.”

Megan stared and frowned, she thought for a moment and saw that the memories only looked like an impression. She couldn’t help but nod and say, “The events look very vague, the wine was very strong. I remember Holly drinking a lot along with me. I didn’t expect to get drunk. Did father know?”

Megan’s father was naturally Smith, Megan somewhat feared that the matter was made known to Smith. Although Smith didn’t prevent her from playing with her friends, she didn’t know how he’ll react when he finds out that she got drunk. After all, the teachings of the family were very strict.

Little May didn’t think anything of it and nodded,” He knows. Last night, the Lord was informed. But when he learned that Miss got drunk off the liquor that Mister Wales provided, he didn’t say anything but made you take a good rest.”

Megan sa stunned, then she immediately said, “Come help me change clothes, I want to see father.” May complied, then helped Megan dress herself up.

At this time, the family was eating their breakfast, so Megan went towards the dining hall. She naturally went to the section where the members of the family ate. That was where Smith usually ate.

Calci family had a definite order of rules, if there were no special situations, all of the family members should dine inside the dining hall. If someone dared to make false excuses just to avoid having a meal with the family, they would be heavily punished.

This rule was to make everyone in the family understand that you are on the same level when they ate. If you want to eat at a more advanced place, then you’ll have to work hard and provide huge contributions to the family.

Megan arrived at the dining hall where they usually ate their meals. But when she entered the room, she froze. She didn’t expect to see that her father wasn’t there. Not even a single one of her family was present.

At this time, a servant could be seen walking towards Megan, he immediately bowed and said, “Young lady, you came. The Lord said that today the family will be dining at hall number three.”

The servant immediately continued, “Even though Mister Wales came yesterday, the lord still wanted to introduce him to the family. Therefore, the Lord invited the family to dine inside dining hall 3.”

Megan understood, she nodded and walked towards dining hall 3. Before long, Megan arrived outside the dining hall. Outside the hall was a servant, and inside the hall was the sound of people chatting.

When the servant saw Megan, he hastily said, “Miss Megan!”

Then while the servant was opening the door, Megan immediately went inside.

Upon entering the hall, Megan saw that his father, mother, and two brothers have already arrived. There was a large table inside the hall, but the group surprisingly sat on the side table commonly used for resting.

Megan was City Lord Smith's only daughter. It was a strict rule in Calci Family that men can only have one wife. And that daughters cannot be used to marry outside for benefit.

This rule ensures the prosperity of the Calci Family. Each adult male inside the family is only allowed to have single wife, so the children will have only a single pair of parents. This made it very unlikely for the family to fragment.

Moreover, it was also an ironclad rule for the Calci Family that daughters couldn't be used to marry for benefits. There was a saying inside Calci Family that basically means, if a family sold their women for benefits, then that family will be deemed to fall, this was because if you are forced to marry your family's women for benefits, then that meant that the men were incompetent.

Under these rules, the male descendants of the Calci family' became very outstanding. They took complete obedience to their ancestor's words, so each of them only took a single wife. Because of this, the family showed its solidarity, it didn't show any signs of splitting.

Even though City Lord Smith was only a third-in-line successor of the family, he also respected the words of their ancestors. He only married a single wife and had three children, Chris, Diya, and Megan.

Since Megan was his only daughter, Smith loved her very much. And because of the Calci family's strict standard of education, Megan didn't turn out to be like Ruyen. In contrast, she was a very gentle and well-mannered young lady. The friends that she had

were also very simple friends, this was because all of them knew that she had no influence back at her home. If you ask her to go back to her family to do something, she certainly wouldn't have any power to do it. So those who came in contact with Megan were also like her, children who didn't have any influence back at home. In some sense, they were just people who live there to eat and live simply.

Although the household knew about this, they didn't give Megan a hard time. Instead, they ensured that Megan grew up in a safe environment.

Additionally, Megan's fame was also very good inside Sky Water City. One couldn't count the number of poor people inside the City who have received her good graces. This made her have a nickname inside the city, Plum Blossom Princess.

The nickname had two meanings. The first was that Megan liked plum blossoms, and the other was that she was as pure as a plum, and during the cold winter, she would be there and open up beautifully.

Chapter 360 – Business

Smith looked at Megan who was hastily walking and then smiled to Zhao Hai, “Little Hai, come. I’ll introduce you two. This is my daughter Megan, the little princess of my family. Megan, meet Zhao Hai, ah, he currently uses the alias Wales.”

Hearing Smith saying that Zhao Hai was Wales, Megan couldn’t help but stare. Then she remembered Laura who gave her milk wine yesterday.

However, Megan immediately recovered, she went forward and gave Zhao Hai a salute and said, “Megan has seen Mister Zhao Hai.”

Zhao Hai got up immediately and returned her courtesy, he said, “Miss Megan is too courteous.” Since she was still standing up, Megan went to sit next to her big brother.

But when Zhao Hai looked at Megan, he couldn’t help but feel stunned. Not only because of Megan’s name, but also because of her appearance. When Zhao Hai first saw Laura, she was surprised because Laura closely resembled a certain Taylor back on earth, but she has a bit more courageous aura.

And this time when he saw Megan, he was startled, this was because Megan not only has the same name as a certain american actress, she also resembled her appearance. Both their statures were a bit tall, a sweet and pretty appearance, but this Megan has a certain look on her eyes that the other Megan didn’t have.

Currently, Megan was wearing a young lady’s skirt that most Noble young ladies wear. She appeared very beautiful, as attractive as a real princess.

However, Zhao Hai also knew that staring at a girl for too long is impolite. Therefore he looked at Megan for a short while then turned his head to Smith to continue talking.

Chris and Diya were also sitting at the side and calmly listened to the people speaking on the table. Although they were of the same age group as Zhao Hai, they felt something different from him. It's not only because of his imposing aura, but it was also mainly because he was comfortably talking with Smith as though they were equals, it gave the two young men tremendous pressure.

At this time, the meals were already prepared, since it was breakfast, the dishes on the table weren't very complex, each looked very defined but still simple nonetheless.

Smith invited Zhao Hai and the others to the table, Laura and Meg were Zhao Hai's fiancées, so naturally there were also ushered to the table. In Sky Water City, Laura and Meg didn't need to play a role as Zhao Hai's maids. Presently, Zhao Hai introduced them as his fiancées.

On the table, Smith introduced Megan to Laura and Meg. Laura and Meg were of the same age as Megan, so naturally Smith was hoping that Laura could befriend his only daughter.

After breakfast, Zhao Hai asked Laura and Meg to go the city and play around with Megan while he went to his carriage and went to Shelley Hotel and see Ruyen. He also needed to see Marriott and have his cooperation with Shelley Family begin.

The bull-pulled carriage arrived at the hotel's front door quickly. When the carriage arrived at the hotel, an attendant immediately came forward to greet Zhao Hai while another one went and informed Marriott and Might.

Zhao Hai first went to the suite Ruyen was staying in. Ruyen's room was naturally the best accommodation in the hotel. Because of her connection with Zhao Hai, the hotel has taken good care of her.

Outside Ruyen's room, Shun knocked on the door while Jill opened it. When he saw Zhao Hai, he immediately led him inside the room.

Since this was the hotel's best accommodation, there was a living room present. After Zhao Hai and Shun arrived and sat down, Jill went and served Zhao Hai some tea. Zhao Hai looked at the silent Ruyen and calmly said, "Young lady. This trouble was caused by me. I have already talked clearly with the Grand Duke. He will send a ship to come and meet you, you need only to stay in the hotel these days, you could also take a walk around the city, you're safe here."

Ruyen lowered her head and said, "I thank mister for the care and I apologize for the trouble I caused along the way, I'm sorry."

Ruyen becoming very polite made Zhao Hai feel very strange. Then he shook his head and said, "To talk about trouble, the majority we encountered on the road were mostly caused by me anyway. It should be me who'll say sorry. This time you've lost so many guards without knowing, I'm really sorry about that. If miss Ruyen has any trouble in the future, you can go look for me, I'll see what I can do to help."

Ruyen looked up at Zhao Hai, then lowered her head again as she said, "Ruyen thanks Mister."

Zhao Hai saw that Ruyen didn't want to get in contact with him, but he didn't say anything, he just stood up and said, "Then I won't disturb the young lady any further. Rest well, young lady, farewell."

Zhao Hai led Shun out of the room and saw Might and Marriott standing outside. Zhao Hai couldn't help but stare, then he laughed and said, "What are you two doing here? Are you eavesdropping?"

Might and Marriott couldn't help but stare at each other and smile bitterly, obviously they didn't come to eavesdrop, they were here to see Zhao Hai.

Before, when they heard that Zhao Hai would visit the City Lord, they thought that it would only be an ordinary visit. After all, the

status between Zhao Hai and Smith was quite too far.

But who would've thought that Zhao Hai would actually be given a residence inside the City Lord's mansion? The City Lord even sent some people to tell them that Zhao Hai will now live inside the mansion and that they were here to collect his things.

They didn't dare stop them, one must know that Calci Family was the hegemon inside Sky Water City. They immediately handed Zhao Hai's things over.

This made the two of them worried, they didn't think that Zhao Hai would have such a good relationship with the Smith. If Zhao Hai chooses to cooperate with the Calci Family, then what would happen to them? This became a problem, after all, the Calci Family is much stronger than Shelley Family.

Yesterday, they were very worried that Zhao Hai would cut off his cooperation with Shelley Family. If this was the case, their losses would be very huge. Although losing 10,000 jin of milk wine isn't a big deal to Shelley Family, Zhao Hai was. Zhao Hai was a Space Mage. For such a person to have a connection to them, it would be very good for Shelley Family.

So when they heard from the attendant that Zhao Hai came, the two of them couldn't sit still. They immediately went to Ruyen's room and wanted to intercept Zhao Hai. But when they looked at Zhao Hai's joking appearance, they immediately sighed with relief, this meant that Zhao Hai wasn't intending to cut their partnership.

Marriott immediately smiled and said, "How could we just let you go. Come, come, let's drink a couple of cups" Zhao Hai didn't refuse and followed Marriott to his office.

After the three sat down, a waiter poured the three of them a cup of fruit wine each then he retired. The people that remained in the room were the three people and Shun who stood at the side.

Marriott saw that Zhao Hai didn't make Shun leave, so he reckoned that Shun must be Zhao Hai's confidant. He didn't hold back and asked Zhao Hai, "Wales, you're close with City Lord Smith?"

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "It's just okay, the City Lord was being overly hospitable, so I have no choice but to accept his invitation. He also gave me Sweet Plum courtyard, but I don't like living there, it's too constrained, I might as well live outside."

Marriott can only smile bitterly, if others heard what Zhao Hai just said, they would think of him as a hypocrite. Inside Sky Water city, if you can manage to live inside the City Lord's mansion, then you certainly are someone with extraordinary status. Not to mention, Smith gave him Sweet Plum Courtyard, this was one of the best courtyards inside the mansion.

Might gave a smile and said, "Come on, stop showing off. Right, did you make a partnership with the City Lord?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "Yes, we're also partnering up for milk wine as well as other things. Thus, there would be no way for me to increase how much I supply here. We only have to wait until later on when the output of my wine increases, then we can slowly increase the supply. What do you think?"

Might and Marriott relaxed, it was like piece of heavy stone fell out from their hearts. They were very afraid that Zhao Hai wouldn't be able to cooperate with them anymore. As long as they have a partnership with Zhao Hai, everything was good.

Marriott immediately responded, "Of course, we'll wait until you increase your production."

Zhao Hai looked at Marriott and smiled faintly, "I also have several things that may be used for our cooperation, I don't know if you'll accept?"

Marriott stared, then quickly nodded, "What kind of products?"

Let me see.”

Zhao Hai gave a faint smile as he waved his hand. On the ground, there was a pile of things. Might and Marriott saw very ordinary things, Bamboo rice, and various magic vegetables. These were very common in the continent, not really remarkable.

Seeing their appearance, Zhao Hai just smiled as he said, “Make your people prepare some dishes using these. After he have a meal, then we’ll continue discussing.”

Marriott wasn’t a fool, he knew where Zhao Hai was getting at. So he immediately ordered an attendant to take these rice and vegetables to the kitchen to prepare some dishes and have them sent to the dining hall.

Before long, the group arrived at the dining hall and saw the dishes. The dishes were very ordinary, Zhao Hai smiled and let Might and Marriott taste it. Marriott wasn’t polite, and he immediately tasted the food.

Marriott immediately noticed the differences on this dish. Although these were ordinary dishes, they were cooked by the chef who made his food everyday. But today he felt that even though he had eaten the exact same dish, this one was much better than what he usually ate.

Marriott could confirm that the improvement of the dish’s taste wasn’t related to the chef. This was surely because the vegetables used were very good, so when adding on to the chef’s exceptional skills, the dish made was naturally a delicacy.

Marriott placed his fork down, then he turned to Zhao Hai and said, “You’re saying that you’ll cooperate with this?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, “Right, what do you think? Can we strike a partnership? I can guarantee that the vegetables’ quality will stay the same in the future.”

Marriott’s eyes lit up, “Of course! With your vegetables, the

services of our hotel will reach another level. By the way, how much vegetables could you supply?”

Chapter 361 – Fire Fish Business

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “Plenty, and I also have some magic vegetables not seen before in the continent. If you are interested, I can also supply you with those vegetables along with a few recipes. This will become your unique business. Interested?”

Marriott’s eyes lit up even further, he looked at Zhao Hai and said, “Really? If you have vegetables that didn’t exist in the continent, then we want a lot of them.”

Zhao Hai laughed, “Brother Marriott, you’re being too greedy, I like it. Be relieved, when I go back, I’ll immediately make an inventory on how many vegetables I could produce each day. I’ll tell you after then, what do you think?”

Marriott nodded and said, “Good. then I’ll wait for the news. Much better if it came sooner.”

Zhao Hai nodded, then looked at Marriott, “Brother Marriott, I have another business, I don’t know if ...” Without even waiting for Zhao Hai to finish, Marriott immediately replied, “Sure.”

Zhao Hai continued, “I haven’t even said what business it is. This business is risky. If they’re not a big family like the Shelley family, they won’t be able to handle it, even afford it.”

Marriott’s expression sank, then he calmly asked, “Tell me the business, as long as it’s your business, the Family will be willing to cooperate.”

Zhao hai smiled faintly then said, “It’s not that serious, this business can also be considered as a unique business. But this one will make a lot of people jealous, Fire Fishes!

Marriott stood up, he looked at Zhao Hai and asked seriously, “Fire Fish? How much do you have?”

Zhao Hai gave a smile and said, “10,000 per month.”

Marriott muttered, “Ten thousand, ten thousand.” While Marriott was walking back and forth, Zhao Hai observed his appearance and couldn’t help but faintly smile. Then he turned to the still surprised Might, he shook his head and said, “Hai, these two people, it seems like they went to another dimension.”

After hearing Zhao Hai’s words, the two people immediately recovered. They looked at Zhao Hai with eyes as bright as the sun. Marriott rushed towards Zhao Hai and said, “Brother, are you sure about what you just said? Can you really provide the family with 10,000 fire fishes per month? It’s not 100 or 1,000 but 10,000?”

Zhao Hai smiled and confirmed, “Correct, it’s 10,000. How about that? Would you dare take this business?”

Marriott laughed and said, “Of course! I’d be killed by the family if I decline this business. Brother, ah, you really are my lucky star! You’re Shelley Family’s lucky star!”

Zhao Hai smiled, “Come on, they’re just fire fishes. If you have a lot of money, you can easily get tired of it. To tell you the truth, I barely eat it anymore.”

Marriott didn’t get angry with what Zhao Hai said, he only retorted, “Other people will beat you up if they hear what you just said. Brother, you don’t understand the current situation of the Shelley Family. When we were pressured by Grand Duke Lionheart inside Rosen Empire, our businesses on other parts of the continent became affected as well. Even if we managed to deal with Lionheart, our hotel business would still be in a slump for a long time. But now that brother will supply us with fire fishes and vegetables, we could use them to promote our hotel and get good business. This is why I said that brother is really Shelley Family’s lucky star. But brother, does City Lord Smith know that you have some fire fishes? How could he let go of this business?”

As a native, Marriott clearly knew the value of fire fishes to the people in the continent. The reason fire fishes were valuable was

because they were very rare. If it could be seen everywhere like radishes on the street, it wouldn't be valuable.

This fire fish business was sure to be profitable. Do not underestimate 10,000 fire fishes per month. After processing, Shelley hotel could bring from at least 4,000 to at most 50,000 gold coins per day in income. For other people, seeing the amount of profit that these fire fishes could generate, how could they be willing to give it up?

Upon hearing Marriott's question, Zhao Hai shook his head and said, "This is something that brother Smith didn't know. But don't worry, when I head back I'll go and inform him. After all, these fishes are mine, so I get to choose who to sell it to. He wouldn't object as to who I partner up. Right, I can supply you with 10,000 fire fishes per month but you need to make sure to prepare somewhere the fishes could be stored. You should know that these fishes are quite fragile."

Marriott nodded, "Yes, this should be readied. Don't worry, I'll have it ready in no time."

Zhao Hai faintly smiled, "Then that's it. In two days I should have everything inventoried. You'll also have to tell me where to take the products, but I'd much prefer them delivered here. Transporting cargo to Sky Water City is very convenient."

Marriott nodded, "Ok good. Also, how would you transport the fire fishes? Will they come in a single shipment, or is it possible for you do them in batches?"

Zhao Hai smiled, "Okay then, let's do them in batches. Every batch will take ten days, the first two will have 3,000 fishes while the last one will have 4,000. What do you think?"

Marriott smiled, "That's good, hahaha, then it's settled. We'll just wait here for the news." Zhao Hai nodded then stood up, "Then I'll head back first, I still need to tell Brother Smith about the fire fishes as well as the other businesses." Then he walked out

of the office with Marriott and Might escorting him.

Looking at Zhao Hai leave, Marriot and Might returned to the office. Marriott looked at Might and said, “Might, where did you say Zhao Hai was from? How did he have so many good things on his hands?”

Might replied with a still smiled, “You haven’t checked with the family? Well, there’s no point anyway since there’s not much information about him. From what the family found out, the earliest period where Zhao Hai appeared was when he came from the Black Fortress. It’s the only thing we got from his appearance, he was very low-key. His means were also very fierce, and he always had a lot of good things on his hands. It was precisely because of these products that he couldn’t stay inside Aksu Empire because of Southern King Boris. Boris coveted the things on his hand and even made Zhao Hai form an enmity with the Markey Family. It was then that Laura had a falling out with the family and went with Zhao Hai; she even got engaged to him. It could be said that he had gained two good things, Laura’s business experience as well as the amount of money he made. Afterwards, they went to the prairie. Nobody knew what he did at the Beastman Prairie, he just suddenly appeared again disguised as Wales and went straight to here.”

Marriott nodded, “His identity is too mysterious. Moreover he came from Black Fortress, a very chaotic place. No wonder nobody could look him up. I suspect that he’s from a powerful influence sent to get trained, and especially to amass a lot of money. Otherwise, how would Smith be good to him. We all know that Smith is a fairly arrogant fellow.”

Might agreed, “This matter is truly strange. If he had a relationship with Smith, he should have immediately went to Rosen Empire in the beginning. Why did he have to run up to Aksu Empire, especially in a place such as Purcell Duchy? Moreover, with him being driven out of the duchy, the Calci Family actually

never gave help. If the Calci Family pressured Boris, there was no way for Zhao Hai to suffer that much. This is really weird.”

Marriott nodded, “Only Zhao Hai could explain this matter. But what struck me strange was also the fact that he was quite worried about meeting Smith. Also why did Smith suddenly accept him immediately?”

Might gave a forced smile and said, “Smith isn’t an idiot. Zhao Hai is a Space Mage. How could he not regard him as important.”

Marriott patted his head, “Oh, I actually forgot about that. We’re actually really lucky for making contact with Zhao Hai. Right, did you ask whether it was possible to buy some spatial items from him?”

Might smiled and said, “I’ll find an opportunity in the future to ask him. Anyway, it’s already good to have a connection with a Space Mage. We might even be able to get some spatial equipments to play with later on.” Then the two of them widely grinned.

At this time, Zhao Hai was sitting inside his carriage and headed towards Sweet Plum Courtyard. After he arrived at the courtyard, he immediately went to the Space and returned to Iron Mountain Fortress. He asked Green to perform an inventory on their products to see how much they could supply. After having everything finished, then they would start their business with Smith as well as the Shelley Family.

Today, Laura and Meg were out playing around with Megan. This was also what Zhao Hai wanted, he wanted to have the two women take a short vacation. The two had followed Zhao Hai for so long. They were subjected to the cold winds in the prairie as well as the tension of hurrying along because of the attacks, they didn’t have any time to get relaxed.

Now that they arrived at Sky Water City, they had Megan accompany them around. With the City Lord’s little princess with them, their security isn’t an issue. Thus, Zhao Hai just let them

enjoy their vacation.

Laura and Meg were quite happy, it was quite a long time since they were able to play around. They were different from nerd hermit Zhao Hai, they weren't used to always staying indoors. They were females, they liked window-shopping as well as buying clothes. It was just a pity that because of their situation, they couldn't do that. But today, since they had the opportunity to do so, naturally they would enjoy themselves well.

Megan was also delighted, after all the three's ages were very similar. Moreover, Laura had been a businesswoman for a long time, so she knew how to interact with people and with Meg's gentle disposition that was akin to calm water, the three women immediately bonded with each other very well.

But Megan was confused as to why such beautiful women like Meg and Laura would like Zhao Hai. She really couldn't see anything remarkable with the man.

Megan was only 17 years old, ladies at her age wanted to fantasize. In her opinion, her lover should have a high status, long hair, and a gentle temperament. With Zhao Hai, quite a few of those qualities weren't present. She couldn't understand why women like Laura and Meg took a liking to Zhao Hai.

Chapter 362 – The Restaurant Is Attacked

Yes, to Megan's eyes, Meg and Laura were very outstanding. It even extended to Nier, to Megan, she was a very good lady.

Unexpectedly these three girls were actually with Zhao Hai, Megan couldn't understand. She has seen Zhao Hai, he was not tall for Laura, and his appearance was also ordinary. Manners? In general he looked very boring. Such a man with no merit to get Meg and Laura's affection was very unreasonable.

Although this was what Megan thought deep within her heart, she didn't say it out loud. In any case, Meg and Laura didn't discuss this topic with her.

Sky Water city was a paradise for women who love window-shopping. You could see and buy everything here that was from the continent. The three went to a variety of shops accompanied with several guards. They kept going in and out of stores, their escort guards were stuffed full of things that they bought. Even more pressing was the carriage behind the guards was also full of things.

Women window-shopping was akin to men drinking. Many women do not understand why men liked to drink just as men don't understand why women loved window-shopping. Going out to stroll and buy items, even sometimes coming home with nothing, this made men confused for millenia.

Shue also followed behind Laura and Meg. Zhao Hai sent him to watch over Laura and Meg so that there would be no worries just in case they get into trouble.

For even more guarantee to their safety, Zhao Hai also gave Meg the Ghost Staff. This was so that If something happens, Zhao Hai could arrive at the fastest time possible.

They strolled until noon, when Megan saw that the weather

wasn't morning anymore, she turned her head to Laura and said, "Sister Laura, let's go take a rest and eat."

Laura also watched the skies, she nodded and said, "Right, I'm also quite hungry, let's go."

Megan smiled and said, "Since we are already outside, we should head towards East District where a famous seafood restaurant is located. That place is very famous inside Sky Water City."

Naturally, Meg and Laura wouldn't oppose. It was rare for them to have chance to come out and play, so they would take every opportunity to stroll around.

Not long after the group boarded the carriage, they immediately arrived at the front of a restaurant called Ocean's Home. This restaurant was large, its building was seven stories high. It was here that one could get the best seafood inside Sky Water City, the entire building composed the entire restaurant.

Today, Laura and the others rode inside Megan's carriage. Megan's carriage was pulled by the magnificent 4th rank Magic Beast Snowflake Horse, the same as the one Laura previously used. It seems like women tend to be partial towards this beautiful white horse.

As soon as the carriage stopped at the front of the restaurant, a man walked out of the store alone. This man was dressed in a businessman's garments and looked very ordinary. However, the smile on his face was something people would get mesmerized to see.

When the person saw Megan get down from her carriage, he immediately went forward and bowed, "This one has seen Miss Megan. The restaurant is very honored to be visited by the Miss today."

Megan wore a polite smile and said, "Manager is being too polite, today I came to introduce my two friends to your seafood. I'll have

to ask the Manager to prepare us a table.”

The Manager immediately complied, “It has already been prepared for the Miss. The table is on the 6th floor inside the Sea’s Verse room. In there, not only can you and your friends eat your meal, you could also witness the city’s seascape. This is our restaurant’s best room.”

Megan smiled, “I really troubled Manager. Then please lead us there.” Then the Manager made an inviting gesture and welcomed Megan and the others in.

The Manager personally led Megan to the lift and up to the 6th floor then into a room named Sea’s Verse. The room was very nice, it was more than 40 square meters with a resting area as well as a dining area. The resting area faced the clear glass window showcasing an amazing seascape.

On the sky-blue sea, ships could be seen docked. Sometimes there would be smaller ships that passed by those larger ships, the scene looked very beautiful.

Because Sky Water City was beside the sea, it was still quite warmer here than other places even though it is winter. Today, the city’s skies were very beautiful, the sun was in full bloom up above. Although there was no magic furnaces inside the room, the place was still warm, it was neither too hot nor too cold. The temperature was just right.

After asking Megan to enter the room, the manager told Megan, “Miss, please take a seat. The dishes will be served immediately.”

Megan replied politely, “Thank you, Manager. The manager has taken very good care of me and my friends.” The Manager nodded and smiled, then he turned to exit the room.

Laura looked at the Manager’s departing back, then she smiled and said, “This manager is very interesting, he’s very well-behaved. Do you know him?”

Megan smiled and said, “Not really, but he’s a person from Count James’ family. The relationship between Count James and our family isn’t bad.”

Laura understood, “So, majority of the businesses in the city are controlled by nobles. What businesses does your family have?”

Megan shook her head, “I don’t know about these things nor did I care about it. But the businesses of the family should bear our family insignia, I think they should be very easy to recognize.”

Laura nodded, “Right, from what you said, your family should have more than 100 businesses in the city just from what I counted today. Amazing, that’s a lot.”

Megan stared blankly, “Really, that many? Why didn’t I notice? Hehe, why did you take count of the businesses? You want to take seize the businesses of my family?”

Laura replied, “I’m afraid I’ll exhaust myself if I manage to get your family’s property. I just want to see the kinds of businesses your family has. You should know that Brother Hai came here to do business and he’ll also partner up with your family. I just want to understand the businesses your family depended on.”

Megan looked at Laura and asked, “Why are you very attentive? Does your fiance let you handle these matters? Then what does he do?”

Laura wore a stiff smile and said, “He has way more important things to do, also his body isn’t that healthy. I don’t want him to over exhaust himself. Why are you asking? You seem to have an opinion on him?”

Megan, “I don’t have any opinion on him. I just don’t understand why a beautiful girl like Sister Laura would like such an ordinary looking man. He’s not even as tall as you.”

When Laura heard what Megan said, she couldn’t help but laugh and answer, “Our story is quite long, but Brother Hai is a good

man, he's certainly not like what you imagine. You must know that if a man is good-natured, his status and appearance won't matter. If a girl wants to marry a man, she should marry one who will be good to her, not because of their properties, or status, or ability. It doesn't matter if they are the world's richest person nor the most competent person, if they couldn't make you happy, then what's the point?"

Megan looked thoughtfully at Laura, "You say that he was very good you, but if he really loves you, and also very good to you, then why would he also be engaged to Sister Meg?"

Laura smiled, "Brother Hai grew up together with Meg. Their feelings for each other are very deep. If Brother Hai would really give up on Sister Meg for me, then Sister Meg would get sad. For Sister Meg to be on his side for many years only to be left behind isn't something a proper man would do. If that happens, then what stops Brother Hai from leaving me behind in the future? Little Megan, sometimes, man's heavy affection isn't a bad thing, on the contrary, it is quite better for men."

Meg looked at Megan and said, "What's the matter Megan? Do you have someone you like? How about bringing us to take a look?"

Megan's face immediately reddened, she looked at Meg and retorted, "Don't talk nonsense, with such number of people in the city, how could I find someone I fancy?"

While the girls were chatting, a voice suddenly came from outside, "Young lady, Dean James seeks an audience."

Megan stared then she nodded and said, "Please come in, Dean." The door opened and then a 20-year old young man came in.

This young master looked like a well pampered son of a wealthy family. He was 1.8 meters tall and had good features. He looked like sculpture of a general. He also wore a tailor made suit, it was impossible to not describe him as handsome.

Megan stood up and bowed towards the young man, “I’ve seen young master Dean. How come young master Dean has any free time to come visit today?”

Dean returned the courtesy and then smiled, “I heard that the beautiful Miss Megan has arrived, so I naturally must come and give my greetings no matter what. After all, this shop is under my responsibility.”

Megan faintly smiled, “Young Master Dean is too polite. I just came here to have a meal with my friends, not really a big deal. It’s quite an honor for young master Dean to come.”

Dean smiled, “Miss Megan to coming to dine inside my shop gives me happiness. Today’s meal will be my treat, I hope Miss Megan wouldn’t decline.”

Megan actually shook her head and said, “There’s no need for young Master Dean to do that. Today I treated my friends to eat a meal, so if the young master pays for the meal, then I’ll be unfair to my friends. Also, it would seem like it was the young master who invited us to a meal.”

Dean just smiled and looked at Meg and Laura, since the two of them were not wearing their veils, their appearance were clearly seen by Dean. His eyes couldn’t help but light up for a moment, then he wore his charming smile and said, “I didn’t know that Miss Megan’s friends would be such beautiful ladies. For a group of beautiful women to visit my store is certainly a blessing. I’ll immediately go to the kitchen and let the chefs prepare your dishes quicker. Then, please excuse me, young ladies.” Then after talking, he turned around and left the room.

After waiting for Dean to leave the door, Laura turned to Megan and said, “Megan, that Dean seems to take a liking to you, do you know who he was?”

Megan nodded and said, “Of course I know, he is the second-in-line to the James Clan. Don’t think that he is attractive, he’s

extremely lascivious. Although his business ability is quite good, his lust was more famous in the city. I heard that he has already more than 10 girlfriends.”

Laura smiled and said, “Isn’t this a common thing among nobles? It fact, that isn’t a big deal.”

Megan frowned and said, “It’s not a big deal, but I don’t like it.” As she said that, the waiters already started serving their meal. All of them were made from seafood, and the dishes were beautifully made as well. It stimulated the group’s appetite very much.

Women’s resistance to delicious food was very low, even Laura wasn’t an exception. Now that they have the opportunity, they certainly wouldn’t hold back, they ate very well.

Despite this, from the many years of noble training they had, they ate gently, but they didn’t eat little.

After lunch, they didn’t immediately leave the restaurant. Instead, they sat at the resting area and drank some tea while chatting. Dean didn’t come and bother them, it looks like Dean still had some sense in him, he clearly noticed that Megan didn’t take a liking to him.

While the group chatted, there suddenly came a sound of metals colliding with each other. Both Laura and Meg’s face changed. They were people very experienced with life and death battles and immediately understood that they were under attack. Laura immediately pulled Megan behind her.

Meg used Wind element magic to place and keep the tables and chairs on the room’s door. At the same time, she also watched the door with extreme vigilance. The Ghost staff was also taken out to inform Zhao Hai.

Megan hadn’t encountered this kind of situation before so she still didn’t quite understand what was going on. When she looked at Meg and Laura’s anxious expressions, as well as when the tables

and chairs were pushed towards the door, she immediately asked, “Sister Laura, what’s the matter? What happened?”

Laura looked at Megan’s appearance and smiled as she said, “We’ll be alright, it’s just a small matter. We’ve dealt with these in the past, there’s no need to fear with Meg and me right here.” After saying that, she took out her rapier.

Although Laura was a 5th ranked knight, her rapier skills were still quite good. Also, in such a small and narrow room, using a rapier such as this was the best choice.

Megan became frightened by their actions, she didn’t think that she’ll experience this situation inside Sky Water City. From the time she was little, this was the first time that she was attacked. Although she was also a good mage, she wasn’t very experienced so she didn’t know what to do in this situation. She just stood behind Laura wearing a pale face.

The sounds of weapons colliding became louder and louder. At this time, even the streets outside became chaotic as the city’s urban management brigade arrived. At the same time, they were also accompanied by a team of soldiers. Obviously, nobody quite knew what was happening here as well as who instigated the entire affair.

Seeing the situation, Laura’s heart couldn’t help but loosen. She was very clear that when the soldiers arrived, the attackers would immediately retreat. No matter what, this was Sky Water city, and Megan was the City Lord’s daughter. Those who dared attack Megan inside Sky Water City surely had a lot of guts. But at the same time, they needed to act swiftly and accurately. There was no salvation for them if they miss this opportunity, the Calci Family aren’t really known for being lenient.

Chapter 363 – Furious

At this time, the window of the room suddenly shattered. Strangely, there was nobody that could be seen, but the shattered window was the one closest to Megan.

Zhao Hai's voice suddenly reached Meg's ear, "Be careful, there is a doomed soldier behind Megan, their goal is her."

After Zhao Hai's words ended, the Ghost Staff on Meg's hand suddenly casted several wind blades to Megan's back.

Meg also responded, she immediately shouted loudly, "Laura, be careful, there's a doomed soldier behind Megan, she's their target!"

Laura was also experienced in battle and reacted the moment he heard Meg's voice. She immediately turned Megan around and blocked with her rapier.

The spells coming from the Ghost Staff became quicker and quicker and before long, in the space in front of Laura a person's shadow suddenly appeared. The person was obviously injured by a wind blade.

Laura didn't let go of this opportunity, she immediately attacked fiercely. For a knight like Laura, her fencing techniques were very formidable, so the rapier in her hand snaked outwards to deal a fatal blow.

For the doomed soldier in the shadows, this kind of confrontation wasn't his strong point. Not to mention Laura's rapier, Meg's spells also gave him a headache.

He didn't know that the spells that Meg casted were actually caused by Zhao Hai controlling the Ghost Staff. The spells were very fast and powerful, each of them had the power of a 7th rank mage.

Finally, the doomed soldier wasn't able to resist the constant

barrage of attacks from Laura and Meg. Before long, he was slain by Laura's rapier. The doomed soldier's body was immediately wrapped by a black mist coming from the Ghost Staff before it vanished.

Laura and Meg were no strangers to this situation, they knew that this was done by Zhao Hai. Megan, on the other hand, was terrified.

Megan was a princess who was pampered since she was at a young age. So when she encountered this situation, she couldn't help but be extremely scared, especially after seeing the dead corpse wounded by wind blades. The blood that came out after Laura withdrew her rapier made Megan sick and vomit out the contents of her stomach.

When Laura saw Megan, she froze lightly, then she immediately withdrew a cup of spatial water and supported Megan to sit on a nearby chair. She comforted the young lady and said in a soft voice, "We're okay now Megan, no need to be afraid anymore. The other person was a bad one, we're only fighting those bad people. Come here and have a glass of water to make you feel better."

After Megan heard Laura comfort her, she actually cried. She was really afraid, this was the first time that she witnessed death this close.

Under Laura's comforting voice, Megan felt better, then she received the water on Laura's hand and drank it bit by bit. When the water reached her stomach, Megan's body immediately experienced a warm feeling as the uncomfortable feeling disappeared until her body became stabilized.

At this time, someone knocked on the door of their room, the three women immediately became anxious. Then they heard Shue voice, "Miss Laura, Miss Meg, are you alright? Please open the door."

Laura looked at Meg, then Meg lowered her head, she was

waiting for Zhao Hai's instructions. When she heard Zhao Hai's affirmation, she looked at Laura and nodded her head. When Laura saw this, she couldn't help but feel relieved.

Meg immediately used wind element magic to move the tables and chairs out of the way. Laura opened the door and saw the anxious Shue standing there. When Shue saw Laura open the door for him, he felt relieved. However, when he saw the broken window inside the room, his expression couldn't help but worsen. He bowed and said, "I've made Miss Laura afraid, please punish me."

Laura waved her hand and said, "It's nothing, we didn't get injured anyway. Has the enemy been dealt with?"

Shue immediately nodded and said, "It's solved, the people from Calci Family are also here so the place should be very secure. But Miss, all of those who came and attack us committed suicide."

Laura showed a faint smile, "Did they think that suicide is useful? They forgot that the Calci Family is a family of Dark Mages. They have the means to interrogate dead people."

Shue nodded, at this point a group of armored soldiers walked over led by a young man. Shue looked at the man and opened the door for him. He knew that the young man was Megan's older brother, Chris.

It was very obvious that Chris felt guilt over Megan. He threw away all noble courtesy and rushed straight towards the room. When he arrived, he saw Shue holding the door and Laura who was beside it. Seeing Laura, Chris relaxed and wiped a cold sweat, then he asked, "Miss Laura, is Megan alright?"

Laura smiled and said, "She's alright, but a bit frightened, currently she's getting much better." Then Shue opened the door further and invited Chris towards their room.

Inside the room was Meg sitting beside Megan, comforting the

latter with soft words. Chris quickly entered the room and inspected it. When he saw the broken window, his complexion changed. He thought that Megan hadn't suffered an attack but it looks like it wasn't so. Someone unexpectedly broke through the window and attacked them.

When Megan saw Chris come in, she immediately stood up and rushed to her brother's chest and cried while saying, "Big Brother, I was very afraid. A bad guy jumped in from the window and wanted to kill me."

Chris held Megan and comforted her immediately, "It's alright, Big Brother is here, Megan doesn't need to be afraid anymore"

After comforting Megan for quite some time, Megan calmed down. At this time, a voice suddenly came, "Young Master, young master Dean came to ask for an audience."

Chris' complexion changed as he replied with a cold voice, "Make him come."

Before long, Dean came in, he didn't have his prior demeanor and his head was full of sweat. When he saw Megan was alright, he felt relieved, but when he saw the shattered window, his heartbeat immediately sped up.

Dean immediately arrived in front Chris as he bowed, "Dean has seen First young master Chris. Today, it was our fault for being too lightly guarded that Miss Megan was given a fright. Please accept my apology, I'll promise to visit at another day to apologize to the City Lord."

Chris wore a cold face as he looked at Dean, "Dean, be thankful that my little sister did not have an accident, otherwise, I wouldn't be able to forgive you. You better provide an explanation for today or else I will be impolite." After he said that, Chris turned to Megan and said, "Megan, let's go, come home with big brother. Father is very worried for you."

Naturally, Chris didn't forget Laura and Meg when they left. Chris knew clearly that Megan didn't have battle experience. For his younger sister to be safe, it certainly has something to do with Laura and Meg. In addition, the two ladies were also their guests so he didn't dare to forget about them.

Seeing the group leave the room, Dean's face immediately turned ugly, then he shouted at command, "Someone come here!" A warrior immediately ran in and stood in front of Dean and said, "Young master, what are your orders?"

With a cold voice, Dean commanded, "Go and find out who are responsible for today's attack. When I find out, I will rip them to shreds." Dean didn't express dissatisfaction with Chris' attitude. He understood that in Sky Water City, Chris' status was the same as a country's crown prince. Chris' earlier actions were already considered polite, if he was replaced by Diya, then Dean wouldn't be able to move from the terror.

Dean's clan had many meetings with the Calci Family, and they even had more meetings with Smith's. So he knew Megan's position inside Smith's family. If something really happened to Megan here, what would Chris do?

Thinking about that scenario, Dean couldn't help but sweat a lot. He believed that if Megan truly had an accident here, Smith would certainly place his anger onto his clan, and the clan wouldn't have any peaceful days from then on.

Smith's power inside Sky Water City was known by all its inhabitants. When they heard that someone attacked Smith's daughter inside Sky Water city, they knew that a storm was coming. All of the powers here knew that they could only bear the brunt of Smith's anger, whether they were involved or not. This was because to them, Sky Water City belonged to Smith.

Chris and the others quickly arrived at the City Lord's Mansion. As soon as they entered the gates of the place, they immediately

saw Smith waiting there. When Megan saw her father, she immediately complained tearfully, and naturally Smith comforted her.

The group immediately arrived at the living room. At this time, Zhao Hai also arrived. Zhao Hai asked Laura softly about their situation. Since he was not at the scene, he naturally worried about the ladies.

At this time Megan recovered, Smith's wife was also comforting her. Then Laura and Meg told the family about what happened when the doomed soldier came in from the window.

Then Meg released the man's corpse and didn't explain anything. Smith also didn't ask too much. He just thought that Meg had a spatial item on her.

The doomed soldier wasn't any different from when it was stored, but this one had its cover removed, revealing his face.

Smith looked at the corpse and became mad as he said with a deep voice, "Someone come and hang this person outside for the public to see. After three days, throw him into the water to feed it to the fishes."

Zhao Hai quickly interjected, "Slow down, Brother Smith. We still need to find out about some information directly from his mouth." Smith looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Do you want to...?"

Smith was also a Dark Mage, so he knew what Zhao Hai meant. Zhao Hai didn't hide any truth from him as he nodded and said, "Right, I'll turn him into an Advanced Undead then let's find out who dared to attack Megan inside Sky Water City."

Chapter 364 – As Expected

Smith never thought of using this method because it was very dangerous for a Dark Mage to turn a body into an Advanced Level undead. Smith didn't expect that Zhao Hai surprisingly wanted to do so.

Smith looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Don't bother, doing that kind of thing is too dangerous and it will have a huge impact on you. Just believe in the power of my Calci Family, we'll definitely find out who is responsible for today."

Zhao Hai shook his head, "Consider this matter finished, it'll take too long and I suspect this wouldn't be the last time that they'll attack. Moreover, I suspect that this matter has something to do with me. Otherwise, how do we explain the fact that Megan was attacked just as I arrived at Sky Water City?" He didn't wait for Smith to say anything as he waved his Ghost Staff and muttered a small incantation. A dark mist went out from the Staff and surrounded the doomed soldier's corpse.

Before long, the mist vanished and on its place was a doomed soldier standing there. His wound was gone and if not for the bloodstain you wouldn't think that he just went into battle.

Moreover, the doomed soldier didn't look like an ordinary undead with a body riddled with rotten meat. It's present appearance didn't differ from an ordinary person aside from the fact that it was not breathing and also having a blank expression on its face.

With a serious voice, Zhao Hai commanded, "Tell me your status and why you came here."

The doomed soldier immediately replied. "Yes, master. I don't have a name, I'm only called Thorn 23. I was a member of Grand Duke Lionheart's doomed soldier troop. Our only purpose in Sky Water City was to kidnap Miss Megan and force City Lord Smith to

expel you from the city.”

Thorn 23's words were simple, but he clearly conveyed his identity, the person behind him, and their purpose in coming to Sky Water City.

Upon hearing Thorn 23, Smith's face couldn't help but pale. He didn't think that Thorn 23 would actually be Lionheart's person. It seems like Grand Duke Lionheart really hit his head on something.

Zhao Hai could only smile bitterly and turned to Smith, “I'm sorry, brother Smith. I didn't really expect this thing to happen because of me. I gave Miss Megan a fright.”

Smith waved his hand and said, “Brother, you cannot blame yourself on this matter. I just didn't think that Lionheart would actually be this overbearing, to dare run up to my Sky Water City and kidnap my daughter. He's clearly disregarding my face, he will pay for this.”

Zhao Hai only forced a smile, then he asked a few more questions to the doomed soldier. Unfortunately, Thorn 23 was only a doomed soldier, he didn't know many things about Grand Duke Lionheart, so there were many questions that he couldn't answer.”

Zhao Hai waved his hand as Thorn 23 vanished. He turned his head to look at Megan, “Miss Megan, I really made you frightened today. Please accept this gift as my apology.” He said as he put out a Spatial Bag and gave it to Megan.

Megan already recovered at this time, she looked at the Space Bag on Zhao Hai's hand and became confused, so she asked, “Mister, what is this thing?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, “This is a Spatial Bag, the inside of it can store three cubic meters worth of items. Using it is very simple, you just hold the bag towards the thing that you want to store and it'll take it to its special space.”

After hearing what Zhao Hai said, Smith and the others were all

stunned. Then didn't think that Zhao Hai would actually give Megan a Spatial Item. One must know that a spatial item is very precious in the continent, this gift was way too expensive.

Smith looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Brother, please don't. This gift is too expensive, we cannot accept it."

Zhao hai smiled and said, "It's fine. This is the gift that I'll give to Miss Megan." After leaving the Spatial Bag in Megan's hand's, Zhao Hai sat back down and turned to Smith, "Brother Smith, how do you plan on dealing with Lionheart?"

Smith snorted, "Brother doesn't need to worry about it. Leave it to me, I'll promise that he wouldn't fare any better."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Brother Smith, I just want to inform you that you're not the only one with enmity with Grand Duke Lionheart. There is also someone who hates Lionheart more than you and they already had a plan on dealing with him. Perhaps you could cooperate with them."

When Smith heard Zhao Hai, he was slightly surprised. He immediately responded, "Brother, are you talking about Shelley Family?"

The matter of the Grand Duke suppressing Shelley Family was widely known throughout Rosen Empire. Naturally, Smith also knew about it, so when Zhao Hai proposed cooperating with someone, Smith immediately thought about them.

Zhao Hai nodded, "Yes, it's the Shelley Family. Some time ago, when Lionheart started suppressing the Shelley Family, the family already wanted to deal with him. But because of an internal matter, the family didn't have a chance to counterattack. For this reason, I was also implicated. The reason the Grand Duke wanted to deal with me is because I had a partnership with the family, moreover, I did not follow his command to not stay at their hotels. This made the Grand Duke chase me around up until here. But now that Shelley Family's internal matter was resolved, they can

now carry on and deal with Grand Duke Lionheart. I think that with your help, Lionheart would certainly have no chance to escape.”

Smith nodded, “That is reasonable, for someone like Lionheart, one should finish him in one swift strike, if you fail, he will certainly take revenge. My strength isn’t enough to kill Lionheart. But with Shelley Family being a big merchant family added to the mix, this matter would be easier. I agree, I must ask Brother to mediate this matter for me.”

Zhao Hai smiled, “This is not an issue, I think that the Shelley Family would certainly be willing to work with you. Brother can rest assured. Right, Brother Smith, I forgot to say one thing yesterday. It’s also about business, I don’t know if Brother Smith is interested in dealing with Fire Fishes?”

Upon hearing Zhao Hai, Smith’s eyes couldn’t help but light up, he immediately replied, “Brother, say it carefully.”

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “I already expressed my intent to supply the Shelley Family with 10,000 fire fishes per month. If Brother Smith is interested, I could supply you with 20,000 fire fishes each month. I don’t care what you do with it, I’ll just supply you with those fire fishes.”

Smith’s eyes were sparkling with divine light at this moment, he looked at Zhao Hai and said, “Can Brother really guarantee a supply of 20,000 fire fishes per month?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, “I absolutely guarantee it, moreover they will be alive.”

Smith pat the table and said, “Very well, it’s settled. 20,000 fire fishes per month. I don’t care about the price as long as Brother can guarantee the supply every month.”

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “Then we’re settled. I’ll go back and prepare. Tomorrow I’ll go to Shelley Hotel and tell them about the

matter of your cooperation. I'll excuse myself."

After saying that, he stood up and gave Smith a salute before he led Laura and the others to the exit.

Seeing Zhao Hai's group go out, Chris couldn't help but turn to Smith and said, "Father, this Zhao Hai is too mysterious. Why do you place so much trust in him?"

Smith looked at Chris and said, "Nobody in this world doesn't have any secrets. Why should we fear his secrets, as long as he isn't a threat to us then we're good. He has a lot of enemies in the continent, he could only rely on us for help. So why should we not trust him? Chris, you have to remember, everyone has their own secrets, as long as someone is friendly with us, we didn't need to fear anything." Chris nodded and expressed his understanding.

At this time, Smith turned his head and looked at the Spatial Bag held by Megan. "Megan, show me the spatial bag. It's my first time seeing a bag-shaped spatial item."

Meg complied handed the spatial bag over to Smith. Smith took the spatial bag and carefully inspected it. What he saw was a very well made coarse leather bag. It didn't have an extraordinary look to it, if it wasn't Zhao Hai who gave it, Smith would have thought that they had been duped.

He untied the rope of the spatial bag and curiously looked inside. A magic formation appeared in front of him which gave Smith a scare. But he immediately understood what the magic formation was used for. He went to a chair in the room and pointed the magic formation as he said, "Receive". Then the chair immediately vanished. He placed his consciousness inside the bag and instantly saw the chair hovering inside the space.

Then when he thought about withdrawing it, the chair immediately appeared back on its original position. Smith couldn't help but look surprisingly at the small bag, he didn't expect this very unremarkable bag in his hand to be very extraordinary.

But he didn't take it for himself, he returned the bag to Megan and said, "Megan, this bag is a very special thing. You must take care of it well. Also, do not use it casually and expose it to other people's eyes. There are a lot of people who covet this thing, they would do everything to acquire it. Do not make others know that you possess this thing, understand?"

Megan nodded as she looked happily at the small bag. She also saw the process of Smith using the bag, she didn't think that such ordinary looking bag was very mysterious.

Looking at Megan, Chris and Diya were envious. One must know that spatial items inside the Calci Territory were very scarce, even Smith didn't have one, not to say them.

At this time, Smith's wife stood up and looked at Smith, "Dear, I'll head back with Megan. I'll be giving her a bath and then have her rest, you still need to get busy." Then she led Megan to back to her room.

At this time, Diya looked at Smith and said, "Father, what do you want to do to deal with that bastard Lionheart? Will the Shelley Family really cooperate with us?"

Smith sneered and said, "Our family has been too low-key these recent years that the other powers have forgotten about what happens when they offend us. This matter should be reported to the family as soon as possible. And don't ask me that stupid question, Shelley family cooperating with us will only bring them benefits and no harm, how could the Shelley Family disagree. Now, the two of you, go"

Chris and Diya bowed then turned back.

Chapter 365 – Grand Duke Lionheart and The Buda Family

When Zhao Hai's group returned to Sweet Plum Courtyard, they immediately went to the Space. Upon arriving, Laura and Meg relaxed, Zhao Hai looked at Laura's appearance and smiled, "Laura, I didn't think that you're swordsmanship has become so fierce, haha, that's great."

Laure proudly lifted her chin up, "Naturally, did you think that me being a knight is a joke? I feel that I may even break through to 6th rank soon."

Zhao Hai smiled, "It looks like we need to find you a magic beast mount the next time we go to the prairie. Laura, you could also use a Blood Hawk as a mount, what do you think? After the Ranch levelled up, the Blood Hawks became even stronger. I reckon you could already ride them safely."

Laura smiled, "Forget it, let's talk about this later. There's a lot of magic beasts in the Space anyway, I could just choose anytime I want. If I want to fly, I could use a Blood Hawk. If I want to go on ground, we have Moonlight Lions. We also have the Swordfish to travel on water. If all of them are not enough, we still have Little Wen. I could ask Little Wen to be my temporary mount, no problem."

Zhao Hai couldn't help but laugh. What Laura said was quite right, there were already quite a lot of magic beasts inside the Space. If it came to the point of choosing mounts, Laura would have a lot to choose from.

A few moments after the group talked a bit, Zhao Hai turned and asked Cai'er, "Cai'er, how many vegetables do we have stored right now?"

Cai'er immediately replied, "Presently, we have about 2 million

jin of vegetables, 1 billion jin of grain, around 50 thousand jin of milk wine, and also 20 thousand jin of rations.”

After hearing the report, Zhao Hai nodded, “Reduce the amount of grain planted in the Space and increase the quantity of vegetables. After a batch of Scaleless Fish matures, go and raise some fire fishes, we must make sure to have sufficient supply in both vegetables and fire fishes.”

Cai’er nodded, then went towards the farm to manage it. Even though the Ranch was turned over to Mu’er, Mu’er still listens to Cai’er. This made it so that Cai’er technically managed the entire Space. Zhao Hai directly telling Cai’er about everything is fine.

Now that Zhao Hai’s concerns about the farm were handed over to Cai’er, he nodded and led Laura and the others back to Iron Mountain Fort.

Iron Mountain Fort was already in full blown winter. Snow and ice filled the plains outside the fort while the temperature inside reached 10 degrees. People inside wore thick clothes.

However, the situation inside the fort was generally quite good. Because Cai’er was present, the usage of firewood reduced by a lot. So the majority of bamboo and oil trees were instead used by the slaves to make some furniture.

Although the slaves haven’t done these kinds of things before, don’t forget that Laura already brought in some artisans. So even though the furniture made by the slaves weren’t actually good looking, they were still functional. Thus, there were already a lot of half-step carpenters present inside Iron Mountain Fort.

Zhao Hai was happy when he saw this scene. Those half-step carpenters were already absolved of their slave status. He also told them that if they could improve upon their carpentry, he would reward them with land.

This aroused the enthusiasm of the slaves. After the slaves

returned from their work in the factories, they would begin and practice their craftsmanship. This made some of them reveal their talents which Green noticed. Then he made them wholeheartedly train themselves on the trade.

Of course, the other slaves weren't discouraged to practice. Green expressed that they should still try their best while not being too hasty and not make things focusing on beauty. They should instead focus on quality and functionality, learning to this point is already enough. One should not forget that come spring, a hundred thousand slaves would arrive. And each and every one of these hundred thousand slaves would need their own things to use.

This was also why Zhao Hai really wanted to purchase some artisan slaves upon arriving at Sky Water city. He specifically wanted masons, blacksmiths, as well as artisans who knew how to bake clay bricks.

At the same time, Zhao Hai also wanted to have some craftsmen who specialize in making houses. Building a house wasn't an easy thing; if the house wasn't built good enough, not only would it not provide warmth, it also wouldn't be able to survive winds and rains.

Currently, what Zhao Hai lacked weren't ordinary slaves, it was skilled slaves. Naturally, skilled slaves were not actually cheap, but money wasn't something Zhao Hai worried about.

When Zhao Hai returned to Iron Mountain Fort, he went to Green and discussed their current production. He also wanted to see if it was possible to upgrade their milk wine and ration production.

After discussing with Green, Zhao Hai got a specific figure. Currently, their daily milk wine output was 5,000 jin. At the same time, their wool product output was not bad. Every five days, they would be able to make approximately 20 wool blankets. This figure might look very low, but one should think that these blankets were

hand-made, it required extreme effort.

The ration production was also going smoothly. Now that their rabbit farm was already settled, they would be able to produce 10,000 jin of rations each month. On the other hand, their mutton rations can also be produced at a rate of 5,000 jin per month.

Another important thing was their rabbit leather processing. While the beastmen tan the leather, the human women can turn these leather into fur covered garments. Since the skins of the rabbits inside Zhao Hai's Space were red, the garments and cloaks turned out to be very beautiful.

At this rate, Zhao Hai would be able to add another product to his catalogue; this was very good news. After knowing the situation here, Zhao Hai returned to the Space and discussed with Cai'er how much vegetables they could produce each month. This metric was very important, it was going to be used by Shelley Hotel, which was a stable business that provided more income than their growing business back in Purcell Duchy.

After having Cai'er calculate the vegetable output, the figures Zhao Hai got were: 500 thousand jin of vegetables per month without affecting the required grain and fruit oil output. Supplying this figure to Shelley Hotel wasn't bad at all.

After having all of these counted, Zhao Hai returned to Sweet Plum Courtyard. The current time was already not early, when dinner time came, Smith sent someone to invite Zhao Hai to the mansion's dining hall to dine.

This time, Zhao Hai put out some milk wine to drink with Smith. Presently, Smith came to like the milk wine's flavor.

After eating their meal, Zhao Hai returned to Sweet Plum Courtyard to rest. His rest for the rest of the night went very calmly. However, the entire Sky Water City wasn't.

All nobles and powers inside the city acted, not because they

wanted to revolt but instead to look for the suspect. They wanted to check out exactly who actually dared to touch Smith's daughter.

These powers inside the city don't have choice but to do so, this way, the suspicions towards them would be washed out. They really feared Smith's suspicion. If by chance they get the City Lord's doubt, they wouldn't be able to keep their livelihood inside Sky Water City. And it would not only be inside Sky Water City, they were afraid that they wouldn't even be able to re-establish themselves inside the whole Rosen Empire.

In fact, the major reason why these people became so anxious was the fact that the City immediately went into martial law after Megan was attacked. There were people from the urban management bureau everywhere on the streets. Along with them, the city garrison, warriors from Calci Family, and even mercenary companies were seen inspecting everything along the blocks. On this day, the business inside Sky Water City dropped threefold. It was obvious that the effects of the matter were very huge.

Seeing Smith acted very seriously this time, the aristocrats inside Sky Water city as well as the other powers became nervous. At this time, if someone actually offended Smith, they would die a terrible death.

Compared to the others, the Shelley Hotel was very calm. Although they also worked along with the city and also sent their warriors to patrol around, their range of movement wasn't that large. The people from the hotel only covered two streets near them and made sure that there was nothing unusual going on. The acted very low-key, which was to Smith's liking.

This action was obviously not being handled by Marriott, much less Might. The two of them were inside an office and discussing the matter.

Marriott looked at Might and said, "You say that this matter is related to Zhao Hai? I heard that when Megan was attacked, Laura

and Meg are also present.”

Might nodded and said, “There’s a very high possibility. Except for the arrogant fool Lionheart, I cannot think of anyone else who would dare to act against Megan inside Sky Water City. If Lionheart did it, then his target would be Meg and Laura.”

Marriott thought for a long time and said, “There’s also another group of people who would dare, the Radiant Church. The Church’s influence has been steadily increasing these years. Also, they weren’t dealing with Calci Family, they were going for Zhao Hai; they could also be the likely suspects for today. And if the attack was unsuccessful, they could just plant the blame on Zhao Hai since Megan was the only one implicated. This way, they could create a wedge between Smith and Zhao Hai, which would be great for the Church.”

Might’s complexion went down a single step, “If this really is so, then we’ll be in danger. The Church would likely group us up with Zhao Hai and might deal with us as well. We have to inform the family as soon as possible so they would pay some attention.”

Marriott smiled faintly, “Did you think that the higher ups in the family hadn’t thought up to this point? They may have thought that the benefits Zhao Hai bring are worth it. Moreover, we don’t have any previous connections with the Radiant Church, so in a business standpoint, it would be better for the family to side with Zhao Hai. Now I just hope that Smith wouldn’t get angry at Zhao Hai. It would be really bad for us if Zhao Hai loses Smith as his backer.”

Might nodded, “I also hope so. But I think that when Zhao Hai comes here in two days he would explain the situation to us. On the other hand, if this matter is actually caused by Lionheart, then he would actually be very stupid in offending our Shelley Family as well as the Calci Family. Did he think that he was taking too slow dying?”

Marriott faintly smiled and said, “I think that the present Grand Duke Lionheart was a bit like Aksu Empire’s Buda Clan. Like Lionheart, they were also their King’s sword. Their matter might be casting a shadow towards Rosen Empire’s Emperor. After all, how could the Emperor know that his the sword in his hands would actually go out of control, suddenly acting too arrogant and overbearing.”

Might sneered, “Grand Duke Lionheart isn’t qualified to be paired with the Buda Clan. If the old King didn’t die, it was impossible for the Buda Clan to perish since they acted very obedient and low-key. I heard that their successor, Adam, was a spoiled young master which I think was intentionally made to happen by the Buda Clan. This was so that nobody would suspect that they harbored deep ambition. Nobody would suspect a clan with a useless successor. Even if their family would suffer because of Adam, it would still ensure that their bloodline will carry on. The Buda Clan did a very good job since the old King never held any suspicion towards them. And after the family fell, Adam actually managed to flee. Although they were exiled, the Buda Clan still survived. On the other hand, Lionheart’s son was a rarely seen before martial genius. Not to mention within their clan, he was very famous between the circles of nobility. This brought attention to their family which, regarding Grand Duke Lionheart, wasn’t a great thing.”

Marriott smiled faintly, “In every nation, old aristocrats are always in conflict with the Royal Family. All Royal Families are always thinking of ways of dealing with their old nobles, After all, these families held great power and influence. This was also the reason why our Shelley family didn’t have to fear such actions. Because we are a merchant family and was not as overbearing as the Markey Family, nobody paid any attention to us.”

Might smiled and said, “Speaking of Markey Family, they really had it bad. For Haven products, they unexpectedly had a falling

out with Laura and gave her to Zhao Hai for cheap. Hahaha, I must say that Zhao Hai is quite formidable, Laura is a beautiful woman, moreover she's even taller than Zhao Hai. One could see that Zhao Hai's appearance isn't worth someone like Laura. But surprisingly he made Laura like him, she even severed her connection from her family, that guy has my full admiration."

Looking at Might's appearance, Marriott couldn't help but laugh, "What? You want Zhao Hai to teach you his moves? But I think that would be difficult, Zhao Hai is a Space Mage."

Might also laughed, "Forget it, I don't have his capabilities. But I truly believe that Grand Duke Lionheart made a grave mistake in annoying Zhao Hai. Not only did he lose a lot of men to Zhao Hai, he was also slapped in the face. I expect him to not last for long."

Marriott coldly snorted and said, "Even if he manages to stay, we wouldn't let him feel comfortable. Now that the people from the clan has arrived, our plans could be set into motion. Lionheart staying in his current position would be impossible."

Chapter 366 – The Cautious Smith

Zhao Hai quietly sat inside his carriage as it drove towards Shelley Hotel. When they arrived at the place, the attendants immediately recognized Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai's carriage was very unique, it was difficult to mistake it with something else.

A hotel attendant immediately invited Zhao Hai inside while another one went and notified Marriott. The hotel's personnel were very clear about Zhao Hai's position in Marriott's heart. They didn't dare neglect him.

When Marriott received the message, he stared blankly for a moment. He didn't expect Zhao Hai to come this soon. After all, the matter with Megan hasn't calmed down, he should not be here at this time.

But Marriott still immediately went and greeted Zhao Hai who was waiting at the hotel's lounge; Marriott also invited Might over. After the group sat down, Marriott looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Little Hai, what's the matter?" After meeting several times, they already treated each others as friends. Marriott already changed how he addressed Zhao Hai from Wales to Little Hai in order to make the other side feel more familiar with him.

Regarding how he was called, Zhao Hai didn't mind, he just smiled and said, "Did you forget what I told you yesterday? I already have the amount of vegetables that I produce calculated."

Upon hearing Zhao Hai talk business, Marriott felt relieved. He was really afraid that Zhao Hai had a falling out with Smith and came to ask them for help. Although they would still help Zhao Hai, the family's gains would become smaller since now they couldn't use Zhao Hai as a bridge to form a relationship with Smith.

Marriott smiled and replied hastily, "Good, let's talk about that. I was actually very anxious about it."

Zhao Hai faintly smiled and answered, “I can give you about 500 thousand jin of vegetables, 10,000 fire fishes, as well as grain and fruit oil every month, you tell me how much you need. Is this sufficient?”

Marriott didn't think that there would be so much, his eyes couldn't hide his excitement as he said “Very sufficient, it's absolutely good enough. Be relieved, we will certainly make the price worth it.”

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “I'm not afraid that you'll disappoint me with the price, since these things are mine. If you dare slash the price, I will not supply you anymore. Hahaha”

Marriott and Might also chuckled, then Might looked at Zhao Hai and said, “Brother Hai, can I ask you details about Miss Megan's attack yesterday?” Might clearly knew that Zhao Hai likes a frank person. If you want something from him, then you should get to the point. Zhao Hai's temper was like that of a warrior, he prefers if you just ask him directly.

Zhao Hai replied, “The matter was already investigated by Brother Smith. Even if you don't ask, I'll still inform you since this is the second reason why I came here today.”

Might and Marriott stared blankly, then their hearts immediately sped up as they looked at Zhao Hai excitedly. The two of them could faintly guess what Zhao Hai came here to say.

Looking at their faces, Zhao Hai could only faintly smile as he continued, “Your guess isn't wrong. This time's attack on Megan was instigated by Grand Duke Lionheart. He wanted to capture Megan to force City Lord Smith to expel me from Sky Water City. But it's a pity that he didn't succeed, now City Lord Smith is very angry and is preparing to retaliate against the Grand Duke. I told him that your family also had a grudge with Lionheart, moreover, that you're already prepared to deal with him. So he said that he wanted to work with you, what do you think? Will you agree?”

Although Might and Marriott faintly knew what Zhao Hai was going to say, they still couldn't help but get excited. They didn't expect Zhao Hai to have a high standing inside Smith's eyes. After all, Megan got in trouble because of him; but Smith actually didn't blame Zhao Hai.

Nevertheless, this matter was absolutely a good thing for the Shelley Family. Although they were already prepared to deal with Lionheart, it was not easy to do so inside Rosen Empire. They still needed to pay a small price.

But if the Calci Family were to help them, the matter would be completely different. The Calci family was an established noble line inside Rosen Empire. With their help, dealing with the Grand Duke would be much easier.

Shelley Family and Grand Duke Lionheart's conflict exposed the family to their deficiencies. Although they were a powerful merchant family, they were not legitimate nobles. This made their influence much lesser than a noble like Grand Duke Lionheart. They don't have much power when it came to a national level. Since their business was too big and spread out in the continent, there was no sense of belonging when it came to the various nations that they operate in; they were just treated like outsiders. This made it very inconvenient when they decided to deal with local powers.

Since Rosen Empire didn't consider the family as one of them, dealing with Grand Duke Lionheart would make the family cough up a considerable amount of resources. Otherwise, if they don't pay the nobles enough, they would incur their dissatisfaction, they may even unite against the family at that time, further escalating the problem.

But with Calci Family in the equation, the situation would be different. The Calci family was a formidable power inside Rosen Empire. They were a family that even the Royal Clan would need to think twice before provoking. Fortunately, the Calci Family's

style were to be low-key, so even if the Royal Clan sees them as a thorn in their eye, they didn't have much resentment for the family.

And just as what Marriott thought, Grand Duke Lionheart was a sword that the Royal Clan uses to deal with these old nobles. But now that this weapon had gone too disobedient, they were quite mad.

Now, the Royal Clan was willing to exchange this pawn. In their eyes everyone was a chess piece, and these chess pieces were divided into those useful and those useless. The useful pieces were also further divided to those who were obedient and those disobedient. Royal Clans generally would be willing to let go of these disobedient pieces, this was because these people could cause instability in the near future; not only to the enemy, but also to themselves. Nobody wanted to have someone who will cause them problems in the future right by their own side.

Marriott laughed as he patted Zhao Hai's soldier, "We agree! Why would we not agree to such good deal. Brother, you really are our Shelley Family's lucky star. Rest assured, I can promise you in behalf of the family that we would fully cooperate with the Calci Family. Please pass this message to City Lord Smith for me."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "Good, then I'll head back and inform City Lord Smith. Right, in the next days I will have people deliver the vegetables. How does 100 thousand jin for the first delivery sound?"

Marriott nodded and said, "Good, how will you deliver it here? Do you have a ship?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Be relieved, there will be no mistake." Then he stood up and got ready to leave.

Zhao Hai didn't know that at this time, Smith was also summoning a family elder to the City Lord's Mansion. Naturally that elder was also a Dark Mage.

The elder looked over 60 years old. His head was entirely white, he wore a magic robe and his face wasn't hidden, revealing his pale feature.

Smith looked at the old mage, "How is it, Elder Narro?"

Narro nodded and said, "The same as what Mister Zhao Hai said, the assailants were really sent by Grand Duke Lionheart. It was also true that they were sent to get the young lady and take her as a hostage to make you expel Zhao Hai from Sky Water City. Then they'll deal with him then."

Smith relaxed deep inside, but his expression was quite ugly. Smith was not an idiot, he was in complete control of himself and was not sentimental at all. It was impossible for him to just believe Zhao Hai's words, so he had Elder Narro come and confirm. The elder turned a doomed soldier who attacked Megan into an advanced level undead and asked him the same questions and it turned out to be the same as what Zhao Hai said. Smith was relieved.

At the same time, the fires in his heart ignited completely. Grand Duke Lionheart actually didn't care about Calci Family's face. Although Smith was only the second in line, he was still a very important member of the family. Otherwise they wouldn't have handed Sky Water City over to him. One must know that Sky Water City was Calci Family's money bag.

Also, although Megan was Smith's daughter, she was also the family's most favoured young lady. Historically, the gender ratio between the male and female descendants of the family was mostly skewed towards the masculine side. This was especially true for Megan's generation. In the entire Calci Family, there were only two girls aside from Megan; one died, while the other was an infamous lustful woman and was treated as nonexistent by the family. In the family's eyes, Megan was the best, not only was she attractive, she was also a very gentle obedient woman with a chastity as white as paper. She was the treasure of Calci Family.

Megan's identity was actually even better than Rosen Empire's princess, she didn't need to worry about getting married off. Such a person, for Lionheart to actually dare lay his hands on, naturally incurred Smith's anger. After all, Smith heavily doted on this daughter of his.

But Smith was very calm, he didn't immediately take action against the Grand Duke. He was a person of the empire, so he knew much better than Marriott about the sensitive status of Lionheart. It was not easy to make a move on him, otherwise they might get the attention of the Royal Clan, it was not worth it. His love for his daughter against the family's interests, he had to make a few concessions.

Regarding Zhao Hai, on the other hand, Smith was completely relieved that he didn't lie about this matter. Even after Megan was attacked, he still admitted that it was likely to have been caused by him. He didn't cover it up and instead told Smith everything clearly. This made Smith feel better about Zhao Hai.

Chapter 367 – Smith's Appreciation

A person who was truly honest, and boldly shoulders his responsibility!

This was what Smith classified Zhao Hai as. But when Zhao Hai proposed collaborating with the Shelley Family, Smith's evaluation elevated by another level; he now regarded Zhao Hai as an overall great person.

Being able to use a situation to their advantage was not something that only Merchants do, even Nobles could make use of this philosophy. But in reality there were only a few people who could achieve such feat, and those people were exceptional in their own rights.

Smith greatly appreciated Zhao Hai even more. He believed that such a person was certainly a huge blessing to the League of Dark Mages.

Another point of Zhao Hai that Smith came to like was his ruthlessness. Smith already knew about Zhao Hai's feats on the road heading to Sky Water City. For the powerful Calci Family, matters inside the Rosen Empire rarely escapes their radar. Thus, Smith had someone check Zhao Hai's journey across the empire.

However after he checked, Smith became utterly surprised. This was because Zhao Hai had already killed several thousand people belonging to Grand Duke Lionheart just on the road travelling towards his city.

Several thousand people, what concept was that? Generally, large villages and small cities inside Rosen Empire wouldn't even have that number of citizens. Yet, Zhao Hai managed to eliminate that amount of Lionheart's men. Average people were usually lenient when it came to killing people, but Zhao Hai didn't have that leniency.

Then when Smith accounted for the overall people Zhao Hai killed, including his river travels inside Rosen Empire, the numbers unimaginably reached to 10 thousand!

A single person killing ten thousand? What kind of joke was that? Isn't that something a vicious and merciless person would do? But Zhao Hai exactly did that, this made Smith admire Zhao Hai.

As a leader, it was not acceptable to be merciful to your enemies. If your heart was too soft, it would be very easy for your enemies to control your actions while at the same time it would be hard for you to control your subordinates. That kind of situation was extremely unfavorable to any leader.

Smith also knew how Zhao Hai handled the bandits back in lifeline canyon, this was the reason why Smith didn't see Zhao Hai as a murderous person. He knew how to deal with things and he did it very well. He didn't kill blindly, and wasn't unreasonably ruthless.

Normally, with Zhao Hai's outstanding performance, someone like Smith would harbor some worries. This was because Zhao Hai was someone from the league, if he continues to express his talents, he may be able to wrestle control of the league from the Calci Family.

However, Smith also knew that the League of Dark Mages was a fairly loose organization, even the Calci Family struggles keeping it under control. So Smith knew that it was impossible for Zhao Hai to have complete control of the league, he also believed that Zhao Hai wouldn't bring trouble to the Calci Family.

On the other hand, Zhao Hai and the Radiant Church shared a very deep enmity with each other. People knew that the Radiant Church wishes to get rid of Zhao Hai as soon as possible, this pushed Zhao Hai to side with the League. All of these facts made it so that Smith was very happy that Zhao Hai was an outstanding

member of their organization.

For the league to advance, they couldn't let go of such talented people. This was especially so for those with talent in leadership, these skills were badly needed by any organization.

The reason the Radiant Church was quickly gaining power was because they had been using religion to amass talents from all around the continent. They also have close connections with the higher ups of various nations, and these higher ups would take the task of looking for talented individuals in place of the Church. This made it so that the Radiant Church didn't lack in the personnel department, helping them accelerate their growth these past years.

But in comparison, the League of Dark Mages has fallen short in this aspect. There were only a few people who knew about the existence of the league. Moreover, the league couldn't use religion to attract the masses, after all, who would want to worship something like the Dark God'.

There was also the matter with the temperament of Dark Mages; almost all of them were very eccentric. Not only are they generally bad at leading people, they were bad in interacting with other people, period. Therefore, the league had suffered a disadvantage with their fight against the Radiant Church. Currently, the only leading role present inside the League was the Calci Family, but even they couldn't control all of the organization's members. This was not good for the family since if all the Dark Mages were to be eliminated by the church, their family's end wouldn't be too far off.

So when Smith saw this new member of the league who had enmity with the Radiant Church, possess astonishing strength, popular with the beastmen, vicious, and most importantly, a good leader, he knew that this Zhao Hai was the talent that the league badly needed.

Smith also knew that Zhao Hai went to the hotel today, so he

chose to wait. He wanted to know that kind of news Zhao Hai would bring when he returns.

Before long, Zhao Hai returned to the City Lord's Mansion and came to find Smith directly, this was what the latter told him. No matter what Smith was doing, he would always place Zhao Hai's matter in front. So when Zhao Hai came to look for Smith, Phil immediately brought him to the City Lord's office.

When Smith saw Zhao Hai come, he immediately smiled and said, "Hahaha, Brother you came, how was it?"

Zhao Hai knew that his whereabouts in the city couldn't possibly be hidden from Smith, so he didn't think of anything when the City Lord asked him that question, he immediately smiled and said, "Great, the Shelley Family agreed. They said that they'll certainly give their full cooperation on this matter. But you'll have to discuss it within yourselves, I have no interest on this stuff."

Smith quickly replied, "Little Hai, you can't do that, you're the intermediary. You must be involved. How about this, I'll have someone call over Might and Marriott so we can discuss immediately. After the discussions, then we will instantly message each other's families."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "You must discuss those things yourselves. I don't really have a grasp of these kinds of situations. I might listen to it, but I have nothing to add to the formula. Just have someone tell me what you decided, or if you need me for anything. Is that fine?"

Smith saw that Zhao Hai really didn't like to participate in this matter, so he didn't push him any further, Smith just nodded and said, "Very well, but when it comes to dealing with Lionheart, you shouldn't help."

Zhao Hai smiled, "Be relieved, he chased me for so long and I had long wanted to deal with him. Now that there's this opportunity, as long as you deal with him, I'll just stay in the backlines and

observe.”

Smith nodded, the Zhao Hai turned back. Him and Smith didn't discuss anything about their business. Smith was currently busy with coping with Lionheart so Zhao Hai believed that it was not the proper time to discuss those matters.

When he returned to Sweet Plum Courtyard, Zhao hai didn't notice Laura nor Meg. They weren't inside the house but instead were at the small are near plum garden.

They were doing lady stuff there, and there was also another lady who wasn't familiar with Zhao Hai, so he naturally wouldn't bother the group. When Zhao Hai returned to his room, he immediately went to the Space to rest as well as see if Smith invited Marriott at this time.

Although the City Lord's Mansion was big, it wasn't to the degree where the monitor cannot cover the entirety of it. While he was inside the City Lord's Mansion, it was obvious that Zhao Hai could monitor what Smith and the others were doing.

The reason why Zhao Hai decided to hide and didn't accept Smith's invitation was because he didn't want Smith to be suspicious.

When Smith and Marriott discusses how to deal with Lionheart and their respective coordinations, they would inevitably speak about the strengths and capabilities of their families. Both of them understood each other and were in cooperation so there wouldn't be any problem in sharing information. But Zhao Hai was an outsider, someone completely unrelated. Under such circumstances, it would be hard to say whether or not Smith and Marriott would be on guard against him. Zhao Hai thinks that Smith's invitation was just to see whether Zhao Hai wanted to participate, if he did, Smith would have probably doubted him.

Although he didn't know exactly what Smith had in his mind, Zhao Hai still thinks that he shouldn't be involved in their

discussions. After all, he could just listen to them right here, so why bother staying there?

Smith immediately sent someone to invite Marriott over, he wanted to get this matter taken care of as soon as possible. The earlier they deal with Lionheart, the lesser time the Grand Duke would have to prepare, and also the less resources they would need to spend.

This time, with Lionheart's attempt in kidnapping Megan being a failure, it was certain that he would be on guard. If he was given too much time to prepare, he would be even harder to deal with.

Marriott didn't expect Smith to invite him over to the mansion this quickly. When Smith sent someone over call him, he immediately knew what Smith wanted to discuss. It was this point that solidified Marriott's idea of Zhao Hai's position in Smith's heart. It really seems like Smith was very fond of Zhao Hai, otherwise he wouldn't call Marriott over this quickly.

Marriott and Might immediately rode their horses towards the City Lord's Mansion. Phil was already there to invite them over to the mansion's living room where Smith was waiting for them.

Marriott and Might immediately gave a salute to Smith. The City Lord was also polite and quickly asked the two to take a seat while a servant served them fresh tea. After Smith drank a bit of tea, he turned to Marriott and said, "Manager Marriott, I know that your Shelley Family and Lionheart has an enmity with each other, which resulted in Megan being attacked. Naturally, I won't blame this matter onto you, but no matter what, I cannot just let Lionheart off easily. So currently, your family and mine have a common enemy. I was told by Little Hai that you have already prepared to deal with Lionheart. Can you tell me about your plans?"

Chapter 368 – Benefits

Marriott didn't get offended by what Smith said, since it was indeed fact. The main cause of this incident was the grudge between Shelley Family and Grand Duke Lionheart.

If not because of the enmity between Lionheart and the family, Zhao Hai wouldn't have become enemies with the Grand Duke, then Zhao Hai wouldn't have been chased around the empire and becoming plotted a lot using various methods.

Therefore, Marriott approved Smith's view. The Shelley Family will have benefits with no repercussions with this time's cooperation, so Smith's accusations would have to fall on deaf ears. In the end, this was the difference between an experienced merchant versus a great noble.

Great Nobles hold their dignity dearly, anybody who dared disregard their dignity would be fought and dealt with. This was something that they needed to do because in their opinion, a Great Noble who didn't have any dignity couldn't be called a Noble. This mentality was something that was cemented onto their souls across the years, this pride wasn't something that they couldn't just erase.

But Merchants were different, there was a saying for merchants in old poetry; Profits outweigh words. This meant that, to Merchants, profits were the most important, as long as one profited, they didn't care if they were looked down or sometimes have their dignity stepped on.

Thus, Marriott just showed a faint smile and said, "It is also because of what City Lord has said that we came today bringing this small gift for Miss Megan, I hope that the City Lord wouldn't decline. We also wanted to express our full cooperation for today's discussion, after all we will have to depend on the City Lord."

Smith looked at Marriott and smiled, "Then I'll take this for

Megan and then continue on with our plans. I actually wanted to invite Little Hai today to participate, but Little Hai said that he had nothing to contribute. But he also said that if he would help if something comes up, he was also hounded around by Lionheart.”

Marriott smiled, “This matter had really been unfair to Mister Zhao Hai. Because of my family and Lionheart’s matter, he actually got involved, this wasn’t in our initial intentions.”

Smith looked at Marriott profoundly, then he smiled and said, “Don’t treat Zhao Hai like a fool, a person like him meeting you is a boon for your family. If you don’t treat him with sincerity, then he would forever disregard you as a person on his side. Am I right?”

Looking at Smith’s expression, Marriott could only smile bitterly. His power inside the family was not small, but the ones who made decisions for the family were the elders. The tests conducted on Zhao Hai were also because of the elders. Marriott wanted to disagree with that but his influence as a manager was very limited.

Although Zhao Hai was currently in a very good relationship with them, who knows what Zhao Hai actually felt deep inside. Zhao Hai doing business with them was certainly not for profit. If Zhao Hai really did rely on the Shelley Family, then he wouldn’t have given the bigger slice to Smith.

Might knew that Zhao Hai’s feelings towards Smith was greater. If the family didn’t doubt Zhao Hai before, they should have gotten more benefits from him. For the Shelley family, these benefits would have ushered them to new heights, it was a pity that they have missed this chance.

Smith looked at Marriott’s expression and understood what was going on. Actually, the Calci Family’s attitude towards Zhao Hai wasn’t better off, it was only because Smith appreciated Zhao Hai that he was very hospitable to him. Now it seems like Zhao Hai’s gratitude gave him very great benefits.

Marriott sighed and didn't pursue this topic. Now he continued on to how the Shelley Family planned to deal with Grand Duke Lionheart,

Shelley Family's method in dealing with Lionheart was to obtain the agreements of the Royal Clan as well as some Great Nobles. After all, Lionheart's past conduct of being too rampant brought satisfaction to the Royal Clan. Shelley Family wanted to use this opportunity to make them completely remove their connection with the Grand Duke, effectively removing Lionheart's greatest backer. With Grand Duke Lionheart becoming akin to a rootless duckweed, dealing with him would become much more convenient.

After solving the Royal Clan, naturally the Shelley Family also needed to take care of those nobles who were of good relation to Lionheart. Lionheart was not a complete fool, he wouldn't turn himself into a lonely official just because he lost the favor of the Royal Clan. He still had connections to a lot of nobles of great influence. This was also another reason why the Royal Clan was unhappy with him.

But what was the most frightening thing about Shelley Family? Of course, it was money. If they have money, they could buy a lot of things, such as the support of the Nobles.

Now that the earlier preparations were done, what was very difficult was finding the right opportunity to enact the plan. Publicly making war with the Grand Duke wasn't only the difficult part, they also needed to find an excuse to do so, something that would make the Royal Clan and the Great Nobles stay back. For example, pinning Lionheart with an unforgivable crime, this would make the entire Rosen Empire abandon him, but the problem was who was going to accuse him of so?

The original plan of Shelley Family was to pay a great price to a Great Noble and accuse Lionheart, this would give the Royal Clan and the other Nobles an excuse to not make a move.

But it seems like that part of the plan wasn't needed anymore because of the Calci Family. The family was itself a Great Noble family, as long as they come forward and accuse the Grand Duke, the Royal Clan and the other Nobles wouldn't act.

Although the family was acting quite low-key recently, no one dared to underestimate this thousand-years old family, their power was very scary. Additionally, the Calci Family was a family of Dark Mages, so their temperaments were also quite like other Dark Mages, making it hard for people to guess what they were thinking. People of the empire were terrified of the family. Supporting someone like the maddened Grand Duke Lionheart right now would be like stirring up the hornet's nest.

Listening to Marriott's explanation, Smith couldn't help but nod. Looking at the arrangements, Smith could see that the Shelley Family was certainly very wary of Lionheart's threat, otherwise they wouldn't have spent all these resources right now.

At this time, Smith changed how he viewed the Shelley Family. In the end, the Shelley Family was a Merchant family who had immense wealth, however, this wealth was also extremely coveted by a lot of people. If Lionheart succeeds in suppressing the family, then it was certain that the family wouldn't be able to live comfortably in the continent. Such a big fat piece of cake, it was impossible that nobody wanted to have a part of it.

Therefore, the Shelley Family would rather pay a huge price to deal with Lionheart. This was to inform the continent; "We have money, if you offend us, we'll buy your life, not only your life, but your entire family's life, your entire clan's life."

After Smith heard Marriott's words, he nodded and said, "Good, we'll cooperate on this matter. I think we should first amass our military, as soon as we have the manpower, we'll immediately go and accuse Lionheart's clan. We have to make sure that we really kill Lionheart, otherwise he would certainly counter-attack. That situation would be troublesome and would bring huge losses to us.

Take note that he has been the First Lord of the Treasury for many years, his clan should have a lot of properties.”

Marriott nodded, “Right, after I head back, I’ll send a word to the family and make them prepare to mobilize the needed manpower. The City Lord wouldn’t need to have any worries, but I think we should assign which avenues we would place our personnel. This would make us avoid some misunderstandings, what do you think?”

Smith didn’t oppose, he agreed and said, “We should, but we still need to report these propositions to our respective families, then decide to distribute the manpower later. After all, these things needed to be ruminated by the higher ups.”

Marriott nodded, then he asked to be excused along with Might. After they left, Smith immediately prepared the letter to be sent to the Family, telling them exactly what they agreed on.

Smith believed that the people from the family would agree, although the Calci Family was not a merchant family, it was common sense to grasp any opportunity to minimize losses when dealing with an enemy,

Moreover, this matter would allow them to make a connection to the Shelley Family. Even though the Shelley Family was just a merchant family, the family’s hotel business had been spread out across the entire continent, this was simply a hidden Intelligence Network. As long as the Calci Family forms a relationship with them, they would be able to get their intelligence from there. For the Calci Family, this was a very huge benefit to the League of Dark Mages.

This was also the reason why Smith didn’t prevent Zhao Hai from partnering with the Shelley Family. In his opinion, coming in contact with the Shelley Family was a good opportunity.

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Zhao Hai who sat in the Space turned off the screen. He didn't expect the Shelley Family to pay such a huge price to deal with Lionheart. At the same time, he didn't expect that the Royal Clan and the Great Nobles of the empire would agree in the face of benefits. For people like them to let go of someone with the status of a Grand Duke in exchange for benefits, this world was too brutal.

But this also gave Zhao Hai hope in the revival of the Buda Clan. A hope that he could allow the Buda Clan to flourish in the continent once more.

In the end, everything ends up on these two characters, benefit. In the past, the Nobles have dealt with the Buda Clan because of these benefits, they didn't want the old king to use the Buda Clan to decrease their benefits. But in the present, the Buda Clan couldn't be used as a sword anymore, if the Clan could bring benefits to these Nobles, why would they keep hating on the Buda Clan?

In reality, those Nobles didn't hate the Buda Clan. What they hated was the Old King who wanted to weaken their power, the Buda Clan was just a sacrificial pawn.

Zhao Hai reconsidered whether what he was doing was right, and he has come to the conclusion that his current direction was the correct one.

Currently, the Buda Clan was weak, there was no way for them to bring benefits to these Nobles. If they don't get these benefits, there was no way for them to accept the Buda Clan back.

Moreover, from Marriott and Might's words, he understood that this world was a world of benefits. If he was not capable of helping the League of Mages, if he was not capable of helping the Shelley Family, would Smith and Marriott be polite with him? Definitely not.

It was more apparent to great families like the Calci Family and

the Shelley Family, since they were all looking out for their own benefits. If Zhao Hai couldn't provide them with benefits anymore, then they may not hesitate to give up on him.

This was the rule of survival for the aristocracy, but this was also Zhao Hai's most hated rule. If the entire world turns into bare, naked world of clamoring for benefits, what point was there for a person to live in it? Perhaps when that time came, humans wouldn't be called humans anymore, it was more appropriate to address them as wild beasts.

While Zhao Hai was thinking about these things, Cai'er suddenly told Zhao Hai that Laura was outside and that Smith was calling him over to eat.

Zhao Hai's body immediately came out of the Space. He opened his door to walk out and saw Shun approaching his door to call him.

When Shun saw Zhao Hai come out, he immediately gave a bow and said, "Young Master, City Lord Smith asks you to dine with him."

Zhao Hai nodded and looked at Shun, "Shun, have you been well these days? Are you eating your meal? Did they neglect you?"

Shun quickly bowed to reply, "There are no problems, young master, we are eating well. Because of your status, we had been treated with importance, there was no point of neglect. Even the people of Calci Family were very kind and polite to us."

Zhao Hai nodded, "That's good, remember, if there's something wrong, don't hesitate to tell me. There's no need for us to really live here, don't let yourself be made into a scapegoat. If I couldn't protect you, then I wouldn't need to mention the revival of my Clan anymore. That would just be empty talk."

Shun's heart was moved, when he first became Zhao Hai's servant, he didn't expect anything. However, after coming under

Zhao Hai's retinue, his life became incomparable to before. Now, he wasn't worried about his family, moreover he didn't need to do a lot of dangerous tasks. Compared to his past situation, his present life could already be considered as heaven.

Because of this, Shun was very grateful to Zhao Hai from the depths of his heart. The doubts deep inside had long since disappeared. He took a deep breath and stabilized his emotions as he replied, "I thank young master for his care, if there's any problems then rest assured that I will certainly inform the young master. "

Zhao Hai didn't say anything as he patted Shun's shoulder and walked forward.

Chapter 369 – Mantis

When Zhao Hai arrived at the dining hall, Smith was already waiting for him. Upon arriving, Smith asked him to sit down.

After Zhao Hai sat down, a waiter immediately placed new tableware in front of him. At this time, Smith turned to Zhao Hai and said, “Things have been settled. After we prepare everything, we’ll immediately begin to deal with Lionheart.”

Zhao Hai nodded, “That’s good, do you need me to do anything?”

Smith smiled and replied, “Not at this time, as long as everything goes as planned, Lionheart shouldn’t be able to escape. The Shelley Family had already prepared to break his link with the Royal Clan, as long as the Royal Clan don’t interfere, he’s done for.”

Zhao Hai gave a nod, “That’s great as well, but will the Royal Clan really agree? He is a Grand Duke after all.”

Smith smiled faintly, “What about a Grand Duke? As long as you have enough money, the Royal Clan would even agree if you want to get rid of ten of them. Moreover, Lionheart has been very unruly recently, the Royal Clan has long been seeing him as unpleasant. Even if the Shelley Family didn’t move, the Royal Clan would still deal with him given some time. And now that someone wanted to pay just for a mere word from them? Of course they would undoubtedly agree.”

Zhao Hai actually just asked this question deliberately. He already heard Smith and Marriott’s discussion, he just didn’t want Smith to get any ideas that he had been listening.

Zhao Hai still frowned and said, “Lionheart is still a Grand Duke, after all. He still has his Duchy, if he returns back to his territory, he could organize his army, that would be troublesome.”

Smith showed a faint smile and said, “The Shelley Family’s money has been spread out, so long as someone appears and

accuses Lionheart, he would be stripped of his title of Grand Duke before the Emperor and his Council. When he isn't a Grand Duke anymore, dealing with him would be much smoother."

Zhao Hai understood what Smith wanted to do, it was very ruthless. They would make the Rosen Empire strip Lionheart off his title, making him unable to mobilize the soldiers in his territory. When that time came, they could do anything they want to him.

Zhao Hai nodded, "Still, Lionheart's Clan is also a Great Noble Clan, even if they cannot ask the empire for soldiers, they should still have their own private army. Also, the fighting strength of these soldiers shouldn't be weak."

Smith just showed Zhao Hai a faint smile and said, "Little Hai, did you forget what we are? We are Dark Mages, when did the opponent's numbers matter to us? Aren't you underestimating us a little?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "I actually forgot, that's good. If there's anything I need to do, just let me know."

Smith nodded, for this matter, he didn't plan anything for Zhao Hai to do. He wished to show Zhao Hai the might of the Calci Family.

In the following days, the entire Rosen Empire was calm. But they heard that Grand Duke Lionheart has returned to his own duchy to handle some matters. This was also what Zhao Hai expected, Grand Duke Lionheart wasn't totally stupid, he knew that if his plans for Megan were to fail, the Calci Family would certainly know that he did it. Now he did what Zhao Hai just expected, heading back to his territory and stubbornly resist.

Zhao Hai didn't know that when Lionheart received the news that his plan had failed, he immediately sought the help of the Rosen Emperor. He wanted the Emperor to come forward and talk with the Calci Family and say that Lionheart was willing to pay

any price to resolve this matter.

But Lionheart didn't expect that the Emperor would actually decline while also giving him the cold shoulder. This made Lionheart know that the Emperor had already given up on him. So as soon as he could, he rode his horse and left Carson City for his own territory.

His response was very quick. If he was any slower, there would be no chance for him to escape since the Calci and Shelley Family's troops have already been gathered to deal with him.

Every person of status in the Empire knew of this matter, but they didn't make a move since they already received the bribes from the Shelley Family. All of them kept mum and just watched Lionheart with a look of schadenfreude. They just waited for Lionheart to fall, then they would take all of his belongings.

If Lionheart falls, his fief would become ownerless. When that time comes, it would be divided up by the Nobles. In addition to the bribes that Shelley Family provided them, the Grand Duke had also offended the Calci Family, thus, no Noble Family came to help Lionheart.

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Zhao Hai observed the entire situation with cold eyes. He knew that he couldn't openly participate in this matter. All Nobles' eyes were red from waiting for the benefits they'll get. At this time, if he were to participate, the profits would still be divided, and he was sure that he wouldn't get anything great.

But Zhao Hai didn't shut himself in, three days after he met with Marriot, he sent them the 100 thousand jin of vegetables he promised to supply. Now that the vegetables were sent to the Shelley Hotel, it was up to them as to how to divide it among themselves.

However, Zhao Hai didn't supply Marriott with fire fishes this

time, those fishes were too delicate. He wanted to wait until this storm has passed before he gets a boat to send the fire fishes here. This action isn't strange, one must know that spatial items present on the continent couldn't hold living beings. If Marriott saw Zhao Hai bring out some fire fishes, he would certainly be surprised.

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The movements of Shelley Family and Calci Family were very quick, they only took seven days to prepare everything. Then Calci family began to accuse Grand Duke Lionheart of sending an assassin to the Calci Family, this violated the Empire's law.

Hearing the accusation of the Calci Family, all of the Nobles smiled, it was not because there wasn't such law inside Rosen Empire. On the contrary, the Empire did have such a law, it was just that it wasn't honored. If there were two nobles who had enmity with each other, what would be the most optimal thing to do? Of course it was assassination, because of this aspect, nobody actually respected that law.

Now that the Calci Family came out to enact this law, it was very clear that it was just an excuse. However, these Nobles also understood that this meant that the Calci Family would begin suppressing Grand Duke Lionheart.

Everyone was just watching the fun from the sideline, not speaking a word. Moreover, the Emperor received the accusation given by the Calci Family and immediately moved to convene the Council. Right then and there, Grand Duke Lionheart has been declared guilty and was stripped off of his position and title. From the date of today's verdict, he was not a nobleman anymore. It also made it possible for Lionheart to mobilize the troops of the empire.

At the same time as the verdict came down, the Shelley Family and the Calci Family began their operations. In just three days, all of the Lionheart's outside influence were removed very easily. What was strange was the fact the the Calci and Shelley Family did

so with little to no resistance.

This made the two families feel strange. They didn't know what Lionheart was doing, did he give up resisting? Absolutely not. According to his previous actions, he would definitely fight back, it was impossible for him to just give up.

Nevertheless, the two families didn't think much of it and immediately rushed to Lionheart's territory. They encircled the Grand Duke's Palace, but when they were about to rush in, the palace suddenly burst into flames! After the fire was extinguished, a troop division immediately rushed into the palace. The entire place was burnt down, moreover, they couldn't find the secret passage of the place. And most of all, Grand Duke Lionheart's family had mysteriously vanished!

The disappearance of Grand Duke Lionheart threw the entire Rosen Empire into turmoil. They didn't expect the Grand Duke to play such an excellent hand. He played both the Calci and Shelley family. And more importantly, nobody in the continent knew where he went.

Nobody knew, save for a single person, and that person was exactly Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai sent a Blood Hawk beforehand to observe the territory as soon as Lionheart went back. Zhao Hai didn't want to participate in such a thing nor did he want to gain any benefits. But he was clear about his enmity with Lionheart. If Lionheart manages to escape, Zhao Hai wouldn't be able to sleep well in the future. So he carefully observed Lionheart and made sure that he wouldn't be able to escape.

And just as he observed Lionheart, one thing came to surface. Grand Duke Lionheart actually had a connection with the Radiant Church! And this time's escape was exactly orchestrated by them.

Although their teachings were very weak inside the empire, one shouldn't forget that they were currently the largest organization in the continent. The Rosen Empire didn't permit the Radiant

Church to proselytize inside their territory, which gave the impression that the Church's influence inside the empire was very weak. They didn't think that the Church would actually pull such enormous wool over their own eyes.

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This time, a total of six 8th rank Mages were sent to aid Lionheart. Simultaneously, they also made their secret hideouts inside the empire to participate in their action. It was the help of the members within these hideouts that Lionheart could manage to leave his territory without alerting anyone.

Zhao Hai didn't stop Lionheart and the Church's actions but instead kept watching the entire time. He didn't disrupt their operations since he wanted to see the true strength of the Church inside the Rosen Empire.

It didn't take another glance to see that the Church had a massive following inside the empire. There were at least tens of thousands of people scattered among these hideouts, and these people belonged to all walks of life. There were even some of them who were small nobles who hardly revealed their true identity.

What Zhao Hai didn't understand was the motive of the Radiant Church to spend this much resources just to help Lionheart. Was it because of his properties?

Chapter 370 – Radiant Church, Good People

It was undeniable that the number of properties that Lionheart possessed were a lot. From what Zhao Hai calculated, his total net worth should have reached several tens of millions of gold coins. But this amount of money shouldn't be enough for the Radiant Church to employ such a number of people to save Lionheart. One should know that the Radiant Church was risking the destruction of all of its forces inside Rosen Empire with this operation.

But upon further deliberation, Zhao Hai came to understand why the Radiant Church did so. It was to please the members of their Knight's Congregation! This group had members among the nobles all across the continent's various nations. Although their positions weren't that high in their respective countries, there were still those who had the same level of standing as Grand Duke Lionheart.

Now, if Lionheart fell without receiving the Church's help, what effect would this situation bring to the Congregation? Will they still continue to help the Radiant Church? So in order to appease the hearts of these people, the Church had no other choice but to rescue Lionheart.

From this conclusion, the Radiant Church decided to use all of their manpower inside the Rosen Empire to rescue the Grand Duke while also sending out six 8th rank Mages. This mobilization of manpower was nothing less of excessive. If the Church didn't fear Rosen Empire's 9th rank experts, they would've also sent in a 9th rank of their own.

Zhao Hai didn't immediately move to crush these believers of the Radiant Church. He knew that the Radiant Church wanted Lionheart out of the Rosen Empire, and the best way was to leave the continent and go to a faraway place. But the Rosen Empire was sandwiched by two empires to the north and south, and the route towards both empires were bottlenecked. If they pass through

those paths, it would be extremely easy for them to be detected.

On the other hand, the Rosen Empire's coastline was very long, with sections fully uninhabited. As long as they know the patrolling schedule of Rosen Empire's navy, they could leave undetected.

Therefore, Zhao Hai only followed them while also taking note of the identities of those who provided help to the Grand Duke. After he deals with Lionheart, he would then give the list to the Calci Family.

Zhao Hai knew that the Calci Family didn't want him to participate in this matter. They wanted to show Zhao Hai the strength of their family. Naturally, Zhao Hai also wanted to show off his capabilities. He wanted to make it known to the Family that his strength wasn't that small.

At the same time, aside from tracking Lionheart, Zhao Hai also did another thing, it was taking away everything that Lionheart didn't manage to bring.

Actually, the fire on Lionheart's palace was caused by Zhao Hai. When the Grand Duke departed, he left behind his spacious palace to the Shelley and Calci Family. Lionheart wasn't able to bring much with him due to the urgency of the matter. There were a lot of good things that weren't taken, such as those furnitures and the like. Since he wasn't able to leave with all of his belongings, Lionheart didn't think of burning his house. He wanted to mock the two families by leaving behind an empty palace for them to find.

But how could Zhao Hai possibly leave such good things behind? So he received all of them inside the Space. And when the Calci Family arrived at the palace, he decided to burn it to the ground.

In the hands of Lionheart was a spatial item, a spatial ring. He placed all of his family's valuables inside and then immediately departed.

Those who aided him were small nobles, which were aplenty inside the Rosen Empire. They live day by day doing their businesses, they were one of the most unnoticed people in the empire.

This made Lionheart's escape from his territory extremely smooth. Time after time, he was sheltered by these people as he headed towards a small noble's territory which was by the sea.

This noble's territory was not suitable for establishing a proper harbor. Nevertheless, the territory had made itself a small port which was not enough for large ships to dock in. This made it so that the noble could only trade salt that he produced in his territory, becoming one of the forgotten nobles inside Rosen Empire.

While on the road, Grand Duke Lionheart was extremely careful. He completely adopted the identity of a merchant, he stayed at ordinary hotels, travelled normally and didn't hurry along, avoiding suspicion.

It was just unfortunate for him that Zhao Hai was present, Zhao Hai found out that all of the places they stayed in were in fact hideouts of the Radiant Church. Since these places were used for cover, it was natural that there were no flaws in their operations. Of course, Zhao Hai also noted these places down.

As Lionheart was moving forward, Zhao Hai was more and more surprised, the route arranged by the Radiant Church went without a hitch. They didn't receive even a little questioning, they just passed smoothly.

When Lionheart's group arrived at the small noble's territory, Lionheart became relieved. The only thing for them to do was board a small boat here and transfer to a bigger boat out at sea. If they manage to board the ship, then they would be safe.

The small noble family was called the Eugene Clan, they had a wave as a family insignia. Inside the Rosen Empire, their family

was as insignificant as their emblem.

Zhao Hai just looked at the Eugene Clan quietly. He didn't want to take action at this time since nobody was supposed to know that Lionheart was here. If he were to attack right now, he will certainly attract attention and he might even be pegged as being the bad guy.

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The most concerned about Lionheart's fate were naturally the Calci and the Shelley Families. The other nobles were indifferent whether Lionheart lives or dies. After all, Lionheart was currently on the run, his territory has been left empty, it was their turn to scramble and grab some land for themselves.

Because of this, the Calci Family's efforts in finding Lionheart didn't go smoothly as planned. It can be said that they didn't have any progress at all.

But Zhao Hai was already carefully following the Grand Duke's footsteps these past several days. He didn't go out, he didn't go see Smith, he just stayed inside Sweet Plum Courtyard observing Lionheart's every move.

Laura and Meg naturally knew what Zhao Hai was doing, so they didn't disturb Zhao Hai. Instead, they continued to follow Megan around Sky Water City to play around. At this time, they were already very close friends with the City Lord's daughter.

Megan saw that Zhao Hai wasn't going outside lately, she felt curious and asked Laura what happened. Laura just smiled and said the Zhao Hai had been busy, but as to what Zhao Hai was doing, she didn't say.

Megan looked at Laura and didn't ask anymore, she knew that it was not good to be overly inquisitive. But this made her even more curious of Zhao Hai, she thought that Zhao Hai's state of being indoors all this time should be extremely uncomfortable. She

couldn't imagine herself not going outside for several consecutive days.

But Zhao Hai didn't need to wait so much anymore, Lionheart was finally about to head towards the sea. For Zhao Hai, this meant that his battle was about to start.

Grand Duke Lionheart's group didn't stay for long in the Eugene Clan's territory. This was because the longer they left Rosen Empire, the more they would be in danger. They saw the influence that the Calci Family was capable of, so naturally they would want to leave the Rosen Empire as soon as possible.

Lionheart only took a day to rest with the Eugene Clan. The next day, they rode a small boat out towards the sea. In Lionheart's family, there was only 32 people who came, the less who came the better, otherwise, their travels would be more inconvenient.

The boat sailed slowly, and before long Zhao Hai was able to see a huge ship with five masts in the distance. Compared to the Swordfish that Zhao Hai acquired before, this one was a lot larger.

Another thing to point out was that the ship was wrapped in armor, it looked like an ocean faring attack cargo ship. Apart from being able to transport cargo, this ship looked like it could defend itself as well.

Zhao Hai carefully looked at the ship, the vessel had hoisted the Ocean Waves Dynasty's flag. And on the hull of the ship were three large characters that read, Poseidon!

The ship's armor was more than ten inches thick, it had magic cannons as well as ballistas. The crew of more than a thousand inside the ship looked very busy.

Naturally this ship was mostly equipped to transport cargo. From what Zhao Hai could see, this vessel could be considered as a thousand ton freighter.

This was a good ship, this was exactly the ship that Zhao Hai

needed right now and it was very fortunate that the Radiant Church had sent it to him. Zhao Hai couldn't help but sigh when thinking about how good of an organization the Radiant Church was, they were truly the servants of the Radiant God, they surprisingly provided for your every need.

At this time, Grand Duke Lionheart and his family embarked on the ship. And as the ship was starting to sail, Zhao Hai knew that this was the signal for him to begin, his figure immediately appeared on the ship.

Naturally he didn't just instantly appear on the ship. He first used the dark mist to surround the deck before he appeared. When his silhouette was seen, he was already holding his Ghost Staff. He didn't change the appearance of the staff, it retained its skeletal appearance along with the skull on top.

A man appearing on the ship holding a skull-headed staff and wearing black robes, those who couldn't see that Zhao Hai was a Dark Mage were idiots.

Obviously they weren't, so the people onboard began to form reactions to Zhao Hai, especially Lionheart. Once he saw what Zhao Hai wore, he couldn't help but change his expression.

This was not because the Grand Duke was afraid of Dark Mages, what he thought was something else, the Calci Family.

Calci Family was a family of Dark Mages, and this time he has forced their hand, now a Dark Mage appeared on board, what did that represent? No matter what the other people thought, the first thing that came to Lionheart's mind was that the Calci Family had managed to catch up.

Who differed from Lionheart's idea were the mages from the Radiant Church. They weren't Light element Mages, in fact, Light element Mages were unpopular inside the Rosen Empire. If the Church sent a Light element Mage to rescue Lionheart, then it was probable that the Grand Duke would end up dead, after all, Light

element Mages were quite conspicuous inside the empire.

These six 8th rank Mages composed of three Water element Mages, two Wind element Mages, and one Earth element Mage, moreover they had hidden their strength.

Chapter 371 – I'll Give You A Sleeping Pill

The reason why these Mages from the Radiant Church had a different thought than Lionheart was because they recognize the appearance of Zhao Hai!

Who were the Radiant Church's enemies? Naturally it was the Dark Mages, and who was the most recent Dark Mage that came into the Church's radar? There was no need to think for a long time, since it was of course Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai had disrupted a number of their affairs, he had also killed their personnel. Therefore, Zhao Hai was already one of the most recognized person among the people from the Church. His appearance had already been spread out, as well as the items that he generally equips. This was the reason why these Mages could instantly recognize him as soon as they saw his profile.

The Earth element Mage that seems like the leader of the group looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Zhao Hai, you actually appeared. Say, are you following us?"

Zhao Hai looked at the group and smiled, "Well yes, not only did I follow you, I also listed every single person that you came in contact with while on the road. I listed their identities one by one."

The Earth element Mage's eyes flashed a cold light. He was very clear about what those people meant for the Radiant Church. They were the church's eyes and ears in the empire, they were also the ember of influence that the Church had planted. If these people were to be revealed, the power of the Radiant Church inside the Rosen Empire would be effectively wiped clean, years of planning would go down the drain.

The other Mages also looked at Zhao Hai with cold gazes. They knew what Zhao Hai's words represented. At the same time, Lionheart froze, he didn't think that the man in front of him was Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai's grievance with the Radiant Church started at Aksu Empire's Purcell Duchy. With Lionheart's status as a Lord of Treasury of the Rosen Empire that was even higher than Evan, how could he possibly take note of such an event on such a place. Naturally he didn't recognize who Zhao Hai was.

Now it was clear that Zhao Hai wasn't sent by the Calci Family. If he was with them, then the family wouldn't have waited for the ship to depart before attacking.

The Earth element Mage didn't say anything more, he just shouted a command, "Capture him!"

Hearing the Mage's words, Zhao Hai couldn't help but laugh, "You want to capture me? Too laughable, first see whether you are able to deal with these." Then he waved his hand as a large number of Undead appeared on the ship.

Among the Undead that Zhao Hai released, there was also a number of Mages mixed in with them. The attacking power of these undead mages weren't low. Most infuriating of them all were the Light element Mages that Zhao Hai summoned and was made to attack the Church's Mages with Light element spells.

Although these Mages that Zhao Hai summoned were only equivalent to 7th rank Mages, they number no less than 20. Twenty 7th rank Mages were enough to completely deal with these six 8th rank Mages.

Zhao Hai didn't just summon these Mages, he also released a lot of Warriors as well as Beastmen. In a blink of an eye, the undead that Zhao Hai let out were fighting with the crew of the Poseidon. There were no places inside the ship for the crewmen to run to.

After summoning everything, Zhao Hai's figure suddenly disappeared from the ship, making it impossible for the enemy Mages to find him. The Earth element Mage immediately took out several Magic Scrolls from his body and ripped them before throwing them outwards.

All of these scrolls contained Light element Spells, they were to be used to deal with Dark Mages. They knew that their main obstacle in saving Lionheart was the Calci Family, which was a family of Dark Mages. In order to increase their chances of success, they brought these Light Magic Scrolls. But in the end, they didn't expect to use those scrolls when they already boarded the ship.

Unfortunately, to their surprise, the scrolls were useless when it came to the undead that Zhao Hai just summoned. The undead seemed to not be affected, in fact, they even attacked more frantically.

A saving grace for their side was the fact that although the ship was a freighter, due to the waters of the Ocean Waves Dynasty, these crewmen could also become pirates. Therefore, their combat ability wasn't low and they still can fight for some time.

But unfortunately for them, the crew couldn't hold out for too long. They didn't expect that the Undead that Zhao Hai brought in would have a very high fighting capability. Each of them were equivalent to 7th rank warriors, moreover, each and every one of them weren't afraid of getting injured nor getting killed. They didn't feel fear even if they meet a 9th rank expert, let alone these 8th rank mages.

The time of the battle wasn't long, after about an hour, there weren't any other living being left on the ship. Even though Lionheart was killed, Zhao Hai didn't turn him into an undead, instead he chopped up the head of the Grand Duke along with his son.

Grand Duke Lionheart's son held great reputation inside Rosen Empire. He was even called a once in a generation martial genius. He was just over 20 years old but he was already a 7th rank warrior, he was truly fierce, a pity that he was dead now.

Zhao Hai wasn't polite to his enemies, after he killed every person on the vessel, he immediately turned the crew into undead

before receiving the ship. Naturally, he didn't forget to take Lionheart's ring off.

Inside that spatial ring was Grand Duke Lionheart's entire wealth which added to a total of tens of millions of gold coins. Adding on to his other possessions, his net worth would certainly reach a terrifying hundred million gold coins.

Zhao Hai was shocked by the number, but it also made him extremely happy. With this amount of money, funding for the development of the Black Wasteland will certainly not be a problem.

After taking care of everything, Zhao Hai immediately returned to the Space and prepared the list of all the people who helped Lionheart.

The names of 10 thousand people were not easy to write, it was fortunate that Zhao Hai had already been writing these past few days, so he only had a few names left to jot down. Just after the curtain of darkness fell, Zhao Hai had completed the list. He let out a long breath, the big show has finally arrived.

...

Smith had been very bothered these past few days, he had not yet captured Lionheart. Without Lionheart on their hands meant that their operation was a failure. He didn't care about Lionheart's belongings, the main reason for their action was Lionheart offending the Calci Family. If they couldn't deal with the Grand Duke, then the face of the Calci family would be smeared. If they couldn't uphold the prestige that they had for so long protected, they might very well become a laughingstock among the Great Noble Families on the continent.

At this time, Phil's voice suddenly came, "Sir, Mister Zhao Hai came for an audience."

Hearing Phil's words made Smith stare blankly. This was because

Zhao Hai hadn't made any appearance these past few days. He was just inside Sweet Plum Courtyard everyday. Smith didn't know why he came here today, but he still said, "Invite him in."

Just after he talked, Zhao Hai pushed the door open and came inside. Upon entering the room, Zhao Hai bowed to Smith and said, "Brother Smith, are you ok? What are you doing?"

Smith forced a smile and said, "Brother, why are you too polite? I could be busy with anything else right now, but Lionheart's capture made me unable to eat and sleep."

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile and said, "Brother, I have good news, I've come to give you your sleeping pill. I believe that if you take a look at these things, your appetite and desire to sleep will return." Then he waved his hand as a bag appeared on the ground, the bag was made of leather and smells heavily of blood. Next, Zhao Hai took out a book and placed it on the table.

Smith looked at the bag. From the contours seen on the leather, the bag's contents were most likely heads. Smith turned to Phil and nodded. Phil immediately went forwards and opened the bag.

Inside the bag were two heads, Phil recognized that they belonged to Lionheart and his son. Smith, who also saw the bag's contents, turned to look at Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai calmly said, "This time, Grand Duke Lionheart managed to escape because of somebody's help, fortunately I was present, they've already been dealt with. In this book is a list of all the people who helped Lionheart along the way. I'll hand the identities of those people to you, however, I need to keep all of Lionheart's money. My land is currently in need of these coins, I won't be polite."

Smith looked at Zhao Hai and laughed, "Good! Brother, your Big Brother has certainly underestimated you, good! Rest assured, that money is all yours, nobody would dare take it away from you. Brother, I must thank you. Without you, my Calci Family would

certainly lose massive face. I'll have to tell the Shelley Family about this, after all, this was also a matter of their enmity."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "Those are for you to do, it's none of my business. You'll have to deal with the aftermath of this event, I'll head back."

Smith nodded and said, "No problem, you go back and rest. Leave the remaining matters to me."

Zhao Hai nodded, and turned away slowly. Without even waiting for Zhao Hai to exit the house, Phil asked Smith, "Master, do you think that Mister Zhao Hai was actually able to kill Lionheart? Didn't he stay inside the courtyard all these days?"

Smith showed a faint smile and said, "You don't need to worry about that. Anyway, the matter had already been solved. Phil, you need to remember that you must never pry open the secrets of people like Zhao Hai. Otherwise, he wouldn't treat you very well. Go and deliver the heads to the family. Along the way, go and inform the Shelley Family." Phil nodded as he took the bag and turned away.

Smith picked up the book that Zhao Hai left on the table. He turned it open and looked at its contents. At first he was just carelessly reading the characters, but what he realized afterwards made him more and more surprised.

Listed in this book were all the people who aided Lionheart, their names, their age, where they work, their families, they were all written very clearly. And the most important thing was their identity, Radiant Church spies!!

Seeing the number of characters written, Smith couldn't help but feel his scalp go numb and his head exploding. He never thought that this incident actually involved the Radiant Church, this fact made him very surprised.

Just after looking at two pages, Smith couldn't sit still, he

immediately shouted loudly, "Someone, come here!"

Phil immediately walked in from the outside, the matter with the heads didn't have to be accomplished by his own hands. Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to accomplish much. So he would just delegate those tasks to other people and just followed on Smith's side.

Hearing Smith shout, Phil immediately came, he bowed to Smith and said, "Master, what are your instructions?"

Smith said loudly, "Quick, quick, go invite Little Hai back here." Phil didn't know what Smith's intentions were, but he still immediately complied and turned around.

At this time, Zhao Hai just arrived at Sweet Plum Courtyard. Surprisingly, Laura and the others didn't go out and play today. The women were having a small tea party in the living room of the courtyard. There was a pile of snacks on the table, each one of them held a wine glass and sipped on it lightly. Most of the time they were chatting while eating some snacks from time to time.

Zhao Hai naturally wouldn't disturb them. While he was heading to his own room, Phil arrived. Phil immediately came forward to call Zhao Hai and say, "Mister Zhao Hai, the City Lord asked for you."

Zhao Hai stared blankly, but he instantly understood why Smith made him return. He nodded and said, "Very well, let's go." Then him and Phil returned to Smith's office.

Upon entering the room, Zhao Hai saw Smith walking in circles. Seeing Zhao Hai arrive, Smith's flushed face turned to him and said, "Brother, are those characters that I saw real?"

Zhao Hai stared for a moment before he nodded, "Of course they are real, I'll never deceive you in this matter. When they saw my clothes, those guys immediately recognized me. I also took them back, nobody escaped." Then Zhao Hai summoned the undead

Earth element Mage. Zhao Hai made the Mage introduce himself, he was a product of the Radiant Church's Ultimate Weapon program, but since he was an 8th rank mage, he was a failure.

However, Smith noticed Zhao Hai's words. When he took away the Mage, Smith looked at Zhao Hai, "Brother, did you personally go and slay Lionheart?"

Zhao Hai nodded, he showed a faint smile and said, "Actually, I'm not just a Dark Mage, I can also use, Light, Water, Fire, Earth, Wind, and also Space Magic. Didn't you receive word from Bell? I cannot be considered as a Dark Mage, it was more appropriate to call me a Divergent Mage. Among my Divergent Abilities is something related to Space, but it cannot be used to attack a person, only to store some things inside. Moreover, I also have flying Phantasmal Beasts. They're very formidable, they can carry a person when they fly. I used these Phantasmal Beasts to chase down Lionheart."

Smith believed Zhao Hai's words. Compared to Dark Mages, Divergent Mages were more mysterious and rare. So when Zhao Hai said that he was a Divergent Mage, Smith chose to believe him.

As for the Phantasmal Beasts, Bell already informed him about those, so he was not particularly surprised about them.

Chapter 372 – Shock

Regarding Zhao Hai being a Divergent Mage, Smith had also heard of it from Bell, so he wasn't very surprised. Smith nodded and said, "Brother, no need to worry, no matter what you are, as long as you join the League of Dark Mages you will always be one of us. After all, not all of our members are Dark Mages. If you have a grudge with the Radiant Church, you're on our side. Brother, rest assured, I will go and deliver this information. This intel is very important not only to the League, but also to the Rosen Empire."

Zhao Hai was confused with what Smith just said, although the Rosen Empire wasn't very warm towards the Radiant Church, they also didn't go and actively suppress it. So why was this information very important to the Empire?

Smith looked at Zhao Hai's appearance and knew what the other party was thinking. After he invited Zhao Hai to sit down, Smith smiled slightly and said, "The most fearful aspect of the Radiant Church is their religious power, then can use this influence to brainwash people and make them completely subject to their whims. They could make people believe the Radiant God, making them perform sacrifices in the name of their belief, this was a terrifying thing. Imagine an entire country full of these devout believers, what influence would the Church have in that entire nation?"

Zhao Hai nodded, he had also heard of these kinds of things back on Earth. Some religious cults would use methods to brainwash their believers. Moreover, religion was a very sensitive matter in society, it was very hard to be on guard against it. What's more terrifying was the fact that this type of influence was very hard to eradicate, they would continue to resurge time and time again.

Seeing Zhao Hai nod, Smith continued, "Thus, the Radiant Church is the most disliked organization by the Emperor. Although the Rosen Empire isn't blatantly attacking the Radiant

Church, whenever a person sent by the Radiant Church was tracked down, the Emperor would send his doomed soldiers to kill them secretly. Because of this, we all thought that the Radiant Church didn't have much influence inside the empire. But it seems that we were wrong, if all of these 10,000 personnel were to secretly preach, they could amass followers that would number in the thousands. If these followers were to bring in more potential followers, the Radiant Church would become a huge problem in the Empire before long."

Zhao Hai understood what Smith was talking about, he smiled and said, "My thoughts didn't reach to that point, what I know is that the Radiant Church is our League of Dark Mages' enemy, I only wanted to deal them a blow. Rest assured, that list is completely true, those were all of the people who aided Lionheart in reaching the Eugene Clan's Domain. Lionheart rode on a small boat to transfer to a large ship further out at sea. The boat held the Ocean Waves Dynasty's flag as well as having the name of Poseidon. It was a ship with five masts. It was actually very fortunate for me since I badly needed a ship to transport Fire Fishes to Sky Water City. Naturally I would have to be impolite, I couldn't give this ship to you."

Smith laughed, "Brother, with this information, not only would I not covet your ship, I would even gift you two more. As long as we get to eliminate these Radiant Church fellows, I am willing to pay any price."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "You don't need to give me more ships, but I need to ask you a favor. This time I acquired the Poseidon, I also have the Swordfish that Lionheart used to attack me before, these two ships were very well made. However, these two ships are easily recognized, I'll have to ask you to help me modify them. Otherwise, people would know that it was me on board whenever I travel. What do you think?"

Smith waved his hand to Phil and told him, "Uncle Phil, I'll have

you arrange this matter. Go prepare our best shipyard to help Little Hai modify his ships.” Phil nodded, but he didn’t leave, this wasn’t something that needed to be done right now. It was already sufficient for him to write it down.

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “Good, as long as you help me arrange these ships, the grains, vegetables, milk wine and rations would be able to reach here faster than inland transportation. Also, I’ll leave you with that list, that’s none of my business, however, don’t disclose that I had a hand in it.”

Smith laughed and said, “Very well. Haha. Brother come and share a drink with me. I’m very happy today.” Upon hearing that, Zhao Hai had no chance to decline. The group headed towards the dining hall.

While Zhao Hai and Smith drank, Phil went and did his own tasks. First was to deal with Lionheart and his son’s heads, then there was the list and lastly Zhao Hai’s ships. All of these were for him to arrange.

For Great Nobles, the position of housekeeper held great power. It was closely equal to being the right-hand man of his lord. In fact, there were a lot of times that a great housekeeper made a family shine.

Phil was a housekeeper that the Calci Family trained, so he had no problem with regards to his loyalty. Moreover, he held strong management ability, this made Smith place a great trust on him, hence why he always called the old housekeeper Uncle Phil.

That night, Zhao Hai drunk a lot of liquor, so he slept early when he returned to Sweet Plum Courtyard. Smith also drank a lot, he was very happy, not only because Lionheart’s matter was resolved, but also because of the list and Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai’s demonstration of his capabilities made Smith really glad. For such a talent to join the League of Dark Mages was a great boon for the organization. This was definitely a good thing.

The next day, when the people from the Rosen Empire came to know that Lionheart was slain by the Calci family and even had his severed head displayed in public, the masses went into an uproar.

The other nobles inside Rosen Empire couldn't help but get startled. Although they didn't concern themselves in pursuing Lionheart, this didn't mean that they didn't make a move at all.

They also sent people to look for Lionheart's whereabouts. Although they gave up later on, they were still curious. The strength of these nobles were not weak, but they still couldn't find Lionheart. And now that the Calci Family killed Lionheart, didn't this mean that the Calci Family was much stronger than them?

Thinking of this, the Nobles were naturally startled. The Calci Family had been acting low-key these past years. Although nobody dared underestimate them, there was also nobody who thought that Calci Family would be this formidable, they just regarded them as an ancient noble clan, someone not to provoke.

On the continent, it was sometimes more appealing to offend a Royal Clan than an Ancient Noble Family. This was because there were some Ancient Families that existed longer than Royal Clans.

Since these nobles regarded the Calci Family as an ordinary Ancient Family, they didn't offend them. They knew that these kinds of families were very protective of their dignity. If these families' dignity were to be touched, they would without hesitation retaliate, they would even resort to fighting to the death.

This time, the nobles weren't able to find Lionheart, but this was also the same situation for the Calci and Shelley Family. This made the Nobles feel quite good for themselves, they wanted to see how ugly Claci Family's face would become.

But they didn't expect that the Calci Family would suddenly put out Lionheart's head. There was no need to even ask about the fate of the rest of his family, they were truly dead as well.

Lionheart was killed, although the nobles were surprised, they weren't too surprised. In their opinion, Lionheart would die sooner or later. What made them surprised was the fact that the Calci Family was able to track and kill Grand Duke Lionheart.

The other nobles guessed that Lionheart's disappearance was certainly due to some people helping him. This was not strange, if nobody helped him, then it was impossible for Lionheart to escape the joint forces of the Calci and Shelley Family. In a situation where Lionheart was lent a helping hand, it was extremely surprising for the nobles that the Calci Family was still able to kill the Grand Duke.

Compared to these nobles, the Emperor of Rosen Empire, Louis Rosen, was even more surprised. But it wasn't because of Lionheart's death, he didn't care about that guy's life. He was even the person who wanted Lionheart to be killed the most.

Louis was clear that the moment he gave up on Lionheart, there would be enmity between the two of them. If Lionheart survives, he would certainly do his best to get his revenge. By that time, Lionheart would be the serpent in the shadows while he would be the elephant in the sun.

The entire Rosen Empire was his. If Lionheart wanted to take his revenge and find trouble with him, it would be too easy. Even if Lionheart couldn't shake the foundations of the empire, he could still cause them no small amount of annoyance.

Now that Lionheart was dead, Louis was naturally happy. But the fact that the Calci Family was able to slay the Grand Duke didn't make the Emperor happy. Not only was he unhappy, he also felt his back go cold, the family's capabilities made him terrified.

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The Radiant Church had become famous this past few years. Ordinary people liked them because the Church's Light element Mages would cure their illnesses quite regularly, they also looked

very kind, such a person would naturally resonate with the masses.

However, to rulers like Louis, they were very afraid of the Radiant Church. They could use religion to take control of the people. Think about a scenario where the Church completely influences the whole nation, what would happen if the Church suddenly stages a rebellion? Even a formidable Empire couldn't survive a massive internal dispute.

This was the reason why even though the Rosen Empire didn't tear apart the Church's face, it still paid close attention to the Church's movements. All the personnel sent by the Radiant Church to the Rosen Empire who wanted to establish a hideout were secretly killed off by the Emperor.

Louis thought that he did good in defending the empire against the Radiant Church. But when Calci Family gave him the list, Louis couldn't help but be shocked.

Chapter 373 – Didn't Know, Didn't Look, Still Scary

Louis didn't doubt the authenticity of the list, he was clear that the one who hated the Radiant Church the most wasn't them, the royals, but instead it was the Calci Family.

The Calci Family was a family of Dark Mages, and they also had a rich history with Dark element Magic. One of the Radiant Church's goals was to eliminate Dark Mages in the continent, if the church were to fully commit on this goal, the very first ones to suffer misfortune would be the Calci Family.

Louis also didn't think that the Calci Family gave him this list just to grab up some land. This was because there were not that many noble clans in the list that were of notable status, most of them were all small nobles. So even if the Emperor did kill these people, the Calci Family wouldn't benefit from it, so Louis reckoned that the list must be real.

The more Louis trusted the list, the more surprised he became. Louis knew about the brainwashing abilities of the Radiant Church, he knew that these 10,000 people weren't the only ones who were faithful to the Radiant God inside his empire. Who knew how much more people were part of the Radiant Church aside from these 10,000.

After seeing the list, Louis immediately had his doomed soldiers go and monitor the actions of these people.

Louis didn't know how long these people were inside Rosen Empire, he also didn't know the exact number of believers that the church had amassed. So what he needed to do first was track these followers and even if he couldn't deal with all of them, he should at least eliminate the leaders of each group to stop the religion from spreading.

At the same time, these people may have possibly known that they had been exposed, so they must have been preparing to escape the empire. But it was fortunate that Louis acted swiftly, this plan would have to be trashed.

They didn't have time to create another plan since Louis already went to arrest and interrogate the people in the list. He checked for who came in contact with the spies and see whether they were Radiant Church followers or not.

In the end, the investigation found Radiant Church believers belonging to these hideouts that numbered to about a hundred thousand people. Some of them have just entered while some have already been a believer for many years. There were even some who helped those who were arrested, which ended up with them also being arrested.

Louis' actions alerted other nobles. The Radiant Church had always been polite to them, but they were still on guard with regards to the religion. So when they heard the massive amount of arrests and investigations happening all across the Rosen Empire due to these uncovered spies, all the nobles conducted their own investigations about their subordinates who may also be an agent of the Church.

And their investigations bore fruit, in their territories, followers of the Radiant Church were indeed found, in some there were a lot while in others just a few. The only territory who didn't have an ounce of Radiant Church influence was the Calci Family's territory. The Radiant Church had always been wary of this family of Dark Mages, so they didn't dare send some agents to their land.

Finally, when counting all of the church believers that the nobles were able to find, it surprisingly reached no less than two million people. This number was beyond anyone's imagination.

This made the entire Rosen Empire anxious. They carefully scrutinized all of the captured believers. They killed the devout

followers and spared those who just joined, only giving them a light punishment before having them released.

Naturally, when they went to capture and interrogate the people on the list, they didn't blatantly announce that the people were captured because they were believers of the Radiant Church. The empire had to come up with other reasons, such as being a spy, committing a crime, and so on.

After this matter, the nobles of the Empire became even more terrified of the Radiant Church. Normally, they didn't want to offend the Radiant Church, they didn't want to wound that tiger. But unexpectedly, this tiger actually wanted to harm them! The Church sent some missionaries to their lands, moreover, without even notifying them. This made the Nobles indignant, so the entire Rosen Empire started to resist against the Radiant Church's teachings. Naturally, all of these suppression were made while in the shadows. This made the Calci Family very relevant, the nobles wanted to ask the family for advice as to how to handle the Radiant Church since they saw that the Family's territory didn't have a trace of the church's influence.

The Nobles weren't afraid that the Calci Family wouldn't provide any help. This was because they knew that the Calci Family was the vanguard of all those who were against the Radiant Church. So it was correct for them to ask the Calci Family about this matter.

The Calci Family was also very happy with the situation. For these many Nobles to resist the Radiant Church, it would truly be impossible for the church to revive their forces inside Rosen Empire. This was a great thing for the family.

However, the family actually didn't have a concrete advice for the other nobles. The family regarded the Radiant Church very seriously, also, Dark Mages were very sensitive towards the aura of Light Mages. So the method that worked for the family was to make Dark Mages patrol the territory and feel out any light element aura. This was to ensure that there weren't any Light

Mages who were hiding.

But this method wouldn't work for the other nobles since there weren't a lot of Dark Mages in their territories. This matter made the Calci Family a bit embarrassed.

In the end, the higher ups of the family informed their members to help solve this dilemma. So long as they complete this task, the other nobles would feel indebted to the Calci Family. This was very important to the family's future.

When Smith received the request from the family, he couldn't find a solution as well. So he went to Zhao Hai and discuss this matter with him. Smith knew that Zhao Hai had an endless amount of wicked schemes and ideas running around his mind. Zhao Hai should have the solution to the Calci Family's problem.

Hearing Smith explain about the family's problem, Zhao Hai smiled and said, "This is an opportunity to make the citizens of the continent change their views on Dark Mages. In fact, if we want to stop the Radiant Church's influence from affecting the empire, then we should first promote our own propaganda."

Smith looked at Zhao Hai with a puzzled expression, he certainly wasn't be able to understand the kind of propaganda war that happens on Earth. Looking at the other's appearance, Zhao Hai just smiled and continued, "Propaganda is important, in fact, this is the main reason why the Radiant Church was able to spread its influence this far. To look attractive to the outside world, they dressed in a bright white color and always wore a gentle smile; this is a kind of propaganda. So what we need the nobles to do is to continually promote all the bad things that the Radiant Church did all these years. Moreover, this propaganda should get more and more frequent. This is to drill into the citizen's subconscious the fact that the Radiant Church is a terrible organization. This would naturally make them unable to trust the church."

Smith's eyes lit up. To spread its influence throughout the

continent, the misdemeanors that the church had done certainly wasn't a low number, and they weren't able to hide it. The actions that Zhao Hai suggested would certainly deal a huge blow to the Radiant Church. This negative propaganda could even be used as a teaching material.

Zhao Hai added, "Now that almost all of the schools in the empire are under the hands of the nobles to be used for scouting talents, why don't we set up a curriculum in those schools to teach the negative aspects of the Radiant Church? Children tended to believe things they learn from school more than what their parents taught them at home. As long as the schools educate the children about our view of the Radiant Church, the children will believe that the church is bad for their entire life. So when they grow up, they wouldn't be able to believe all the preaches that the church would do. It was even possible for the children to influence their parents. Bit by bit, they would influence everyone around them. Given enough time, the Radiant Church would certainly look repulsive to the empire's residents."

Smith's eyes lit up brighter, he nodded, Zhao Hai's idea was very good and feasible, it was worth a try.

Zhao Hai added more, "We can also use this opportunity to promote the image of the Dark Mages to the populace. Brother Smith, you should know yourself that Dark Magic also has abilities that could be used to treat illnesses. Moreover, the Dark Mage's knowledge of the human body far outclassed those of the Light Mages. This would certainly allow Dark Mages to cure more illnesses in a given time. It could even be said that Dark Mages aren't that worse in curing ailments when compared to the Light Mages. The only problem was just that Dark Mages have been, for a long time, portrayed as a bit strange sort of people. Making the populace unable to really understand what they really are. But with the destruction of the Radiant Church's influence in the empire, there are naturally no more negative words towards Dark

Mages.”

Smith agreed, he understood what Zhao Hai meant since he himself was a Dark Mage.

Zhao Hai then said, “The income of the commoners in the continent aren’t high. So when they couldn’t meet a well intentioned Light Mage, they would go find an apothecary and even then, the prices for the medicine are quite high. The reason that the Radiant Church has been regarded as good was because they would make their Light Mages provide healing for free. So why couldn’t we do the same? We can also have some Dark Mages go out and heal some illnesses of the people, not only those who couldn’t afford to see a doctor but also ordinary people who wanted to be healed. This will surely reverse the image that the Radiant Church pegged to the Dark Mages. So when the Radiant Church decides to suppress the Dark Mages again, it would then be very difficult to do so.

These means were common in Zhao Hai’s view. Back on Earth, which reached the information age, people were very practical when it came to religion. But even then, religious faith still survived. This showed the formidability of belief. There were even cults that still survived because they used rotten methods of propaganda, with this, one would recognize how easy propaganda can be used to influence people.

Chapter 374 – Off To The Sea

But these methods were new and innovative in Ark Continent. The Ark Continent still didn't reach the level of civilization to have newspapers. Napoleon even said before that newspapers are equivalent to 100 thousand soldiers. So it was natural for Zhao Hai to use propaganda to deal the Radiant Church a huge blow. In the future, the Radiant Church may even be regarded as a cult within the League of Dark Mages' territory.

Smith paced around the room slowly, he knew that if Zhao Hai's methods worked, then the Radiant Church would surely be eliminated inside the Rosen Empire while at the same time the status of the League would be elevated.

This elevation of the Dark Mage's status was very important to the profession. The reason why Dark Mages had a hard time finding successors was because their public image was not very good. The population viewed Dark Mages as wicked folk, so how could they be willing to learn Dark element magic?

But this method was also very difficult to implement, there may even be nobles who wouldn't agree, but it was still worth a try. If it succeeds, then it would certainly be very good for the Dark Mage profession.

Smith stopped pacing, then he turned to look at Zhao Hai, "Brother, your method is very good. I'll have to represent all Dark Mages in expressing our gratitude."

Zhao Hai replied with a smile, "This method is actually very difficult to do, I only provided the idea. But there is another thing that I hope Brother Smith would do."

Smith looked puzzled at Zhao Hai, "Brother, tell me."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "I hope that Brother can persuade the league that if the plan became successful, they should create a

disciplinary team to deal with those people who do evil using Dark Magic. Only then would the image of the Dark Mages be changed in the eyes of the continent.”

Smith stared blankly as he pondered about the Dark Magic disciplinary team, this wasn't something he thought of before. To increase their strength, some Dark Mages would perform massacres of the common people. Some would kill others to turn them into undead. These things were quite common among Dark Mages. If Zhao Hai's disciplinary team were to be established, then these people wouldn't be allowed to do these deeds anymore. In this case, the overall strength of the Dark Mages would certainly drop. This was not something that was good for the profession.

Zhao Hai looked at Smith and knew what he was thinking about. Zhao Hai had already been in the Ark Continent for quite some time, so he knew what Dark Mages were really like. He could even confidently say that the current image of the Dark Mages were 50% caused by the Radiant Church, while the other 50% were caused by the Dark Mages themselves.

A Dark Mage's offensive methods were way worse than the other departments, while also having a slow rate of progression. This made the Dark Mages in the continent resort to evil methods to quickly improve their strength. They would turn people into undead for a quick boost in their fighting capabilities. This fact was used to degrade the image of Dark Mages, causing even more people to be unwilling to embark on the profession.

In Zhao Hai's mind, these deeds were a path of no return. The Dark Mages could certainly increase their strength in a short period of time, but in exchange their mental states would become unstable. This would make the progress in their rank quite hard in the future, forcing them to perform evil deeds once more.

A Mage's essence is Magic, your qualitative strength would only increase if you reach a higher rank. But Dark Mages actually focused on making more undead, placing the importance of

ranking up behind, this was not the correct way.

This would not only make them fail to reach another level, they also killed innocent people which caused the populace to view them even lower, causing the profession's reputation to plummet.

Therefore, establishing this disciplinary team was a necessity. Zhao Hai looked at Smith and said seriously, "Brother Smith, if our plan succeeds, there is no other way to make the success continue other than to establish this disciplinary team. We may help people in their problems, but if another Dark Mage goes on and kill innocent people, our efforts would certainly go down the drain."

Smith took a deep breath and replied, "Good, then I will promise you that if our operation succeeds, we will establish this disciplinary team. But on the condition that you will join said team."

Zhao Hai stared blankly, he didn't expect Smith to pull him over to the disciplinary team. He laughed and said, "Very well, but you should know that our plan wouldn't reach completion in a short period of time. We still have to wait a while before creating the group."

Smith nodded, "Now I'll have to send your idea over to the family, after all, they still have the final say in everything." Speaking of this, Smith couldn't help but sigh. Although he was Sky Water City's Lord, he was only one of the successors of the Calci Family, not the Family Head itself. Although he thought that Zhao Hai's ideas were very good, he couldn't be sure about what the other people in the family would think.

Zhai Hai smiled faintly, "I only offered advice, there's no need to follow it. Anyway, using it would bring us no harm, only benefits. Right then, I'll head back now. Also, how are my ships going, have they been modified?"

Smith nodded, "They have been remodeled. You can get some people to drive them away tomorrow. How long will the Fire

Fishes take to arrive?”

Zhao Hai smiled, “They should only take a few days, I just need to have the ships ready.” Then he stood up and prepared to leave. Smith escorted Zhao Hai out the door.

After Zhao Hai left, Smith immediately had all of Zhao Hai’s ideas written down and sent to the family. He feared that if he delayed in writing it, he would miss one or two key points.

When the people from the family received Smith’s letter, they were shocked to see the contents in it. Even the more-experienced members have not heard of such method before. Upon looking on the ideas in the letter, the family knew without even implementing them that these methods would produce very substantial effects.

The family immediately told the nobles about the means to prevent the Radiant Church from establishing its influence on their territories. Also, the family knew that Zhao Hai’s methods needed to be done gradually. If they just send in Dark Mages to cure the nobles’ citizens, they certainly would think that there was something odd going on. Even if there was nothing bad going on, the nobles were certainly not stupid.

So what they needed to do right now was to first start their propaganda of promoting the negative aspects of the Radiant Church, spreading the word to as many citizens as possible. They also planned the anti-Radiant Church lectures on schools. With this, the nobles wouldn’t need to worry about the church seeping into their territory.

The nobles agreed with the Calci Family’s methods, they weren’t dumb, they knew how useful these methods could be.

At the same time, the Calci Family immediately implemented Zhao Hai’s methods in their territory. They didn’t worry about suspicions since there were already a lot of Dark Mages roaming around their territory in the first place. The citizens also knew that they were under the rule of Dark Mages, so they weren’t very

displeased with their presence. This gave the Calci Family a reason to instantly implement Zhao Hai's idea of having Dark Mages cure ordinary people.

Moreover, they expanded upon the proposed methods. Zhao Hai suggested to have a Dark Mage occasionally visit the sick in order to cure them, but the family instead scheduled a fixed schedule for a Dark Mage to visit a certain place. Not only did they give anti-Radiant Church lessons, they also gave a lesson about Dark Mage History among other things.

After hearing these movements, Zhao Hai couldn't help but smile. He thought that he really did underestimate the people inside the Ark Continent, they certainly aren't stupid, he only gave an idea, but they surprisingly added new novel ideas on top of it.

But these didn't have anything to do with Zhao Hai right now. Currently, Zhao Hai, Laura and the others were onboard the Poseidon. The Poseidon was now completely transformed, its symbol was removed as well as having its name changed to Haven.

It was Laura wanted to change the ship's name and Zhao Hai didn't oppose to it. This time, he was the one to profited the most, he got tens of millions in gold coins in addition to the other items that he had looted. Most of all, he actually gained two ships! Also, he didn't need to get commodities for the Haven since it was already filled with supplies from the very beginning.

When Zhao Hai looked at the commodities present, he saw that they were also some items that the Beastmen needed. Although some of them weren't of any value, Zhao Hai didn't care. Come next spring, they could just sell these things to the Beastmen in the prairie. This time, he just wanted to use his two ships.

Manning the ship were the undead sailors who didn't need rest. This made it possible for Zhao Hai to transform the crowded cabin into a luxurious place for living. He changed some storage places as well as some of the living quarters into what he thought would be a

good place to live on. This made the Haven the most luxurious ship present in the Ark Continent.

This time's voyage wasn't just to stock up some fire fishes onto the ship, the group also had another important matter that they would like to accomplish. They wanted to head towards the deep parts of the sea and absorb a portion of it to see if the Space would get some upgrades.

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Zhao Hai placed some chairs on the deck of the ship while he sipped on some tea as he looked at the sea. Because the Haven was a ship which had five masts, it moved very steadily on the water. So the group didn't worry so much and just enjoyed cruising on the water.

Also, while heading towards the deep parts of the sea, they also wanted to find an uninhabited island to establish a base in. Zhao Hai planned to leave some undead on this island to guard it. This would make their future sea travels much more convenient.

Other forces couldn't easily establish bases on islands on the sea. This was because they needed to consider the weather, the food for their personnel as well as their drinking water. Zhao Hai didn't need to worry about these stuff since he will only let undead guard the island. As for the storms, the undead were durable enough to endure them.

Even when they themselves were to stay on the island, they still didn't need to worry since they still had the Space. Also, even if they travel for years in the sea, they still wouldn't have any problems.

What Zhao Hai was worried about was the distance of the island to the Ark Continent. He wanted an island that couldn't be easily seen but was still at a short distance from the continent. Moreover, the island shouldn't have strong Magic Beasts, otherwise, the undead would always get assaulted by these Magic Beasts.

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To be honest, observing the sea while cruising was really a pleasant thing to do. Laura who hadn't done this before was very curious.

When they went out, Megan actually wanted to join them. But Smith didn't agree, this was also the reason why Megan had been very mad at her father these past few days.

Zhao Hai also didn't want Megan to come with them, he didn't want to expose his greatest secret which was the Space. If Megan joined Zhao Hai's group, they wouldn't be able to hide inside the Space when a huge problem came. They couldn't just leave Megan outside wouldn't they? Megan not able to join was in line with Zhao Hai's intentions.

Laura placed her cup down and sighed, "The sea is really beautiful when it is this calm. But it's very scary when it storms. Fortunately we have the Space, otherwise we wouldn't be able to escape unscathed a few days ago.

The group were already at sea for seven days. A few days ago, they were suddenly buffeted by a huge storm. Even though the Haven could withstand most troubles because of its build, the might of nature was not one of them. With a storm that huge, if Zhao Hai didn't have the Space, the Haven would certainly be shredded to pieces. They just waited out the storm inside the Space.

After the storm had passed, Zhao Hai released the Haven again as they travelled onward. Although they didn't experience the storm firsthand, they were still terrified of it just by the seeing its projection on the monitor.

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "The sea is like a moody god. If she was calm, she will warmly welcome us into her bosom as we swim on it. But if she was angry, she would certainly rip you to pieces. But this is the charm of the sea."

Laura agreed, although they were terrified of the storm a few days ago, they couldn't deny the fact that the calm sea was very beautiful.

Laura looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Brother Hai, when will you absorb some seawater into the Space? I want to see what the sea looked like inside the Space."

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Chapter 375 – Ape Island

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “Don’t worry, there should be a lot of new creatures that we could discover when we reach the deep parts of the sea. The Space should level up quite substantially.”

Laura nodded, right now, the most important goal that they have was increasing the level of the Farm, this way Zhao Hai affliction could be cured as soon as possible.

At this time, Meg turned to Zhao Hai and said, “Big Brother Hai, what do you think is happening back at Sky Water City? I reckon that by now, the nobles should have started suppressing the Radiant Church. Do you think that they will succeed?”

Zhao Hai shook his head, “It’s hard to say whether they really can do it. It’s even harder to say whether the Radiant Church could establish their influence inside the Rosen Empire again. But I think the Royal Clan and the nobles would still try and do their best, after all having the church increase its influence is very detrimental to their control of their territory. At the same time, I think that the Calci Family would certainly implement my methods in their territory since the benefits that they’ll achieve should be very huge.”

Laura nods as she added, “The one who worries the most about the potential of Dark Mages in the continent were certainly the Calci Family. The Calci Family was built up by Dark Magic, and they also had the highest status with regards to all of the Dark Mages. If the Dark Mages’ status gets elevated, the family’s status would also be elevated. If the Dark Mages’ reputation plummeted, the family would certainly follow it downward. Thus, the family should be doing what Brother Hai had proposed since it would change the people’s perception of Dark Mages. This solution is what the Dark Mages always wanted.”

Then Laura turned to look at Zhao Hai, “I didn’t think that

Brother Hai would actually be able to think of such a method. To use another kind of brainwashing to deal with the Radiant Church was the best way to go about it. This was also the simplest way to shake the foundations of the church.”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, “This is a propaganda war. This is a kind of battle where swords and spears couldn’t be seen. Sometimes, this kind of war would even be more difficult to defend against than the normal open-air battles we see since it is generally very effective.”

Laura nodded then said, “Will our schools have the same subject? Even though we have a small population right now, it will certainly inflate in the near future. Having those matters taught to the children will be good for our cause.”

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile then said, “We could open such a subject, but we have to change the way we educate it. We can’t just talk badly about the Radiant Church, instead, we should teach the students about loyalty. We should let them understand who gave them their current life and who they should be loyal to. If the children have us in their hearts while they are little, it was certain that we’ll have their loyalty in the future. This way, we would not be afraid of any kind of enemy.”

Laura’s eyes lit up, in fact, this method was also used by some nobles, but they were using it on their slaves. Although Zhao Hai would also do this to his slaves, Laura knew that Zhao Hai intended to change his slaves’ status to commoners. This would mean that Zhao Hai would technically use this method for commoners, something which Laura didn’t understand.

Although Laura was confused about this, Zhao Hai wasn’t. He knew that a leader needed to develop some sort of cohesion with this subjects. Only when this cohesion reaches a certain point would a leader be invincible.

Currently, Zhao Hai’s territory only had a few people, which

made it somewhat easy to manage. But when spring comes, a hundred thousand slaves would arrive. With this amount of people suddenly arriving, managing them would certainly be a bit troublesome.

It was impossible to count on the slaves to have this cohesion, so Zhao Hai planned to release their slave status bit by bit, showing his graciousness while also erecting a school which would educate the slaves. After educating them, it wouldn't matter if they were released from their slavery since they were already taught about loyalty. This was what Zhao Hai planned to do to slowly develop cohesion with his slaves.

Naturally, the best way for people to have cohesion was to have them develop a sort of collective pride. Only when they were proud about their group would they people be able to work with each other properly.

But this method wasn't very good when it comes to slaves. Slaves didn't have anything, even dignity, so how could they possibly have pride.

Therefore, the method that Zhao Hai could only use was this slave education. Of course, he wouldn't treat his slaves like how they were treated before. He wanted to make them understand that they would be far worse off if they decided to leave his territory. If they leave they will only stay as slaves, but inside the Black Wastelands they were complete people.

But all of these things were only inside Zhao Hai's head, he still needs to wait for the new slaves to arrive before proving his ideas. After all, he wasn't afraid of them revolting. These hundred thousand slaves were nothing, even a million slaves wouldn't be able to threaten Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai was so deep into his thoughts that he didn't notice Laura's gaze of awe towards him. Zhao Hai thinks about ideas that Laura had never heard of before. Additionally, these ideas of Zhao

Hai were very orderly, it made people confident that they would actually work.

After quite some time, Zhao Hai recovered. He looked at Laura's eyes and smiled, "Right now, we still need to find a good island. We should also determine if the island's environment is acceptable, and most importantly, safe. It was a pity that the map that Big Brother Smith provided us only depicted the sea, it is of no use at this time."

Laura smiled and replied, "It was not only Big Brother Smith who didn't have a complete map of the seas, nobody in the continent did. The land could be said to be the domain of the human race, but the sea belonged to the sea-dwellers. Sea-dwellers are very mysterious, there were only a few humans who was lucky enough to spot some of them. But they truly exist, they compose of both Magic Beasts of the sea as well as Merpeople. They are very formidable in water and treated humans coming to their territories as invaders. They wouldn't think twice of hunting humans down, not even 9th ranks were spared."

Zhao Hai stared at Laura before he said, "So it was this, no wonder Brother Smith prohibited us from going to the deeper parts of the sea. But we still reached here, why didn't you say anything?"

Laura faintly smiled, "We have the Space, if we are in danger, even if we are inside sea-dweller domain, we could still escape. How could they possible harm us?"

Zhao Hai stared blankly for a moment before he laughed, "No wonder you didn't remind me, it was actually because of this. You are right, nobody would be able to capture us, even those formidable sea-dwellers. Hahaha. But we still need to avoid their territories. I don't want to be enemies with them."

Laura nodded, "It is truly a great idea to avoid becoming enemies with the sea-dwellers while we are at sea. I don't know how they

do it, but almost all of the beings at sea could be used by these seawallers to become their scouts. If we offend them, our ships would certainly be unable to sail anymore. This was even more so if we aren't the ones manning it, our ships would certainly be sunk. This is also why we need to have an island base."

Zhao Hai knit his brows and said, "It would be nice to find a good island, but if it was also easily discovered, then there would be no point for us to make it our own base."

Laura shook her head and replied, "We don't need to worry about finding an island, there are plenty of them out at sea. People who often travel here wouldn't choose islands for supply points if it has a supply of freshwater as well as have a lack of fierce magic beasts. We don't actually need those criteria to choose our island. The only thing we care about is the topography and terrain of the island. Brother Hai, how about we ask the original captain of this ship. He should know a thing or two about the islands around these parts."

The Haven ship that they were currently on board was originally the Poseidon. Its previous crew were all killed and turned into undead to help Zhao Hai sail the ship. In fear of losing their skills, Zhao Hai decided to turn all of the ship's crew into advanced level undead. This was the reason why Laura suggested to ask the ship captain since he should have kept his memories when he was still alive.

Zhao Hai nodded and immediately called the captain over. The captain looked very ordinary and wasn't that tall. Probably because he had been sailing on the sea for years, the captain's skin looked very tough. Even after being converted into an undead, the skin quality of the ship's captain remained still the same.

The captain was named Jinan. When Jinan arrived, he immediately gave a bow to Zhao Hai and said, "This one has seen the Young Master."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, “Jinan, I want to look for an island to become my base. It doesn’t need to have a good environment, but it’s topography should be very good. Ordinary ships shouldn’t be able to pass it. Do you know of any places like this?”

Jinan immediately replied, “I do, there are a lot of these islands around here, the most famous one is Ape Island. It’s shape looks like the head of a giant ape, it was very feared because of the large amounts of reefs that surrounded the island, ships simply couldn’t approach it. But there exists a route towards it. Some people once followed that route and went to the island along with a Water Mage. But upon arriving, they immediately discovered that the island was filled with fierce Magic Beasts, mostly 6th and 7th ranks, their leaders even reached 8th rank. The group decided to retreat, but when they came back to their ship, they were surprisingly attacked by marine magic beasts. Their ship was almost destroyed, fortunately they had a Water Mage to assist them so they were able to survive. The island is a good place with lush forests and a freshwater source. Because of the fierce magic beasts as well as the difficult route toward the island, it was possible that nobody had visited it for years.”

Zhao Hai nodded, he didn’t fear the magic beasts of the island. There was only one route towards the island, if he manages to block it off, then the island would effectively be his own. When hearing Jinan say that the island had a good environment, Zhao Hai decided that this was the kind of island that he was looking for.

Chapter 376 – Blade Scale Whale

Zhao Hai turned to Jinan, “We’ll be heading to Ape Island, do you know the way?”

Jinan nodded, “I know, the Young Master need not worry. But Young Master, there a lot of powerful magic beasts on Ape Island and they are very difficult to deal with. I hear that it is dominated by ape-type magic beasts. They are tall, defensively and offensively strong, as well as movement style abilities. Because they have been living on the island, they also know how to swim, very difficult to cope with. Although they are mostly 6th and 7th ranks, they are already comparable to 8th rank beasts. Moreover, they have an 8th rank leader who could very well match a 9th rank; just without the ability to fly. Young Master, I suggest that we should change to another island.”

Zhao Hai smiled as he declined, “No need, we’ll go head towards Ape Island. I happen to need a lot of Magic Beasts right now, the more of them there are, the better. How many days will it take before we reach Ape Island?”

Jinan replied, “About 5 days, the island is just a day away from sea-dweller territory. This made a rare destination for most ships.”

Zhao Hai nodded, “That’s even better, just in line with what we want. Let’s head there immediately.” Jinan complied, then turned around to change the ship’s direction.

Laura turned to Zhao Hai, “Brother Hai, why did you choose that place? It’s too close to sea-dweller territory. If they decide to attack, we’ll get hit immediately.”

Zhao Hai just showed a faint smile and said, “No special reason, it’s just that it is a good place and fairly close to the deep sea. There may even be some creatures that go close to that place often, that would make it easier for us to upgrade the Space. Moreover, the island’s topography is very good for a base, as long as we control

the route towards the island then we would be able to claim it for ourselves. Also, after we get the Space upgraded, we could try to get in contact with the sea-dwellers. Didn't you say that they couldn't deal with us since we could just run?"

Laura smiled and said, "Then it's good, if we cannot handle them, then we'll run. But from what I heard from Brother Hai, do you intend to capture the Magic Beasts from the island?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "You really understand me, I indeed want those Magic Beasts. Although we already have a lot of magic beasts inside the Space, those beasts' fighting strength aren't that strong. Those ape magic beasts that Jinan described seem to have strong fighting potential, just what I need right now."

Laura nodded, "That's also very good, I hope that those magic beasts could upgrade the Space as soon as possible. As long as Brother Hai's toxin gets cured, then everything will be fine."

Zhao Hai agreed, "As long as the toxin is dealt with, my last worry will finally disappear. Now that I have you two, I don't want to die an early death."

Laura and Meg's face went red, but their hearts were very happy. They know that Zhao hai doesn't want to talk nonsense, this was why they were glad.

When Zhao Hai saw their faces, he gave a small grin and said, "The heavens really does love me, to deliver the two of you to my side. Hehe. It seems like I had done great deeds, I have actually been very blessed."

After hearing Zhao Hai, Meg laughed and said, "Oh, young master, you certainly have done good. Back in the capital, if someone saw you on the street they would actually take the other direction. You have certainly done good things."

Laura laughed, she had also heard about Adam's debauchery back

at the capital of Aksu Empire. Now that she heard Meg tease Zhao Hai, she really found it funny.

The group continued to laugh and talk until meal time arrived. Naturally, what they ate was fish. Although Zhao Hai had a lot of things on hand, they rarely eat fish, this was unjustified for them to do. So Zhao Hai released some swordfishes to get them some fishes from the sea.

With this, not only could they eat fish, they could also increase the number of magic beasts inside the Space. Zhao hai didn't know anything about these swordfishes so he went to Jinan and asked. Jinan told Zhao Hai that these swordfishes are magic beasts from the sea, usually they only surface to these parts when they wanted to lay their eggs, otherwise they would be swimming deep in the sea. Zhao Hai was glad that he was able to capture these swordfishes at the right time.

Because of this, the Space had been steadily increasing its number of magic beasts. But since the general level of these beasts were quite low, the Ranch didn't level up.

Zhao Hai also noticed that the Ranch Had been harder to upgrade compared to before. After crossing level 10, the Ranch's rate of levelling up went the same as when the Farm also crossed level 10.

Zhao Hai tried to absorb some seawater these past few days, but came with nothing to show. It was obvious that getting some life forms from the shallow seas was a useless venture. It was best to get a lot of organisms at one time from the deep seas.

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The following days of travelling at sea came uneventfully. This was mostly because of Jinan who travelled on the seas for 20 years; starting from his youth. He understood the sea more than anyone, as long as there wasn't a huge storm, he could handle most problems by himself.

It was now that Zhao Hai realized the value of the undead that he got from the Poseidon. With Jinan, they wouldn't need to worry much when travelling at sea.

Although the Swordfish was a warship, the Haven still came ahead when it comes to practicality. Not only did the Haven have a thick hull, it also had defensive armaments as well as substantial living quarters. More importantly, it was a Merchant cargo ship, meant for travelling the sea all year round. The Swordfish, on the other hand, was a warship that was mainly used to defend the Rosen Empire's coastline; not exactly designed for far sea travel. So if we speak about navigation experience and quality, the Swordfish's crew couldn't compare to the Haven's.

Just three days after Zhao Hai changed their ship's heading, other ships couldn't be commonly seen anymore. It was just like what Jinan said before, there weren't a lot of ships that would venture these parts. Maybe only ships that carry contraband or pirates would come and sail these waters.

But these Pirates wouldn't dare attack the Haven, even though the Haven was clearly a merchant ship. Just by looking at the ship's thick hull and armaments, the pirates knew that this ship was a hard bone to chew. Even if they were to come and attack, the pirates wouldn't be able to do anything to the ship.

Since they were currently nearing the deep sea, the probability of getting attacked by sea-dwellers increased. This made it so that common navies wouldn't venture this far. It also made this part of the sea a pirate's heaven.

The route that Jinan picked had less pirates wandering on it. Pirates also needed to take a rest, so they generally choose places close to their bases to perform their piracy. Their bases needed to be close to open sea, have acceptable environment while at the same time having little to no aggressive magic beasts.

But it was obvious that Ape Island wasn't one of their choices.

Moreover, the waters near the island had more likely cases of marine beast attacks; targeting ships that dared came close. Thus, there were a small amount of ships present here.

Zhao Hai didn't care about these dangers, if there were beasts that attack, he would just release some arrow turtles to drive them away. If arrow turtles aren't enough, he would just directly capture the beast using the Space.

Just as he was thinking of this, the Haven suddenly shook. Zhao Hai stared blankly, then he immediately opened the monitor. Currently, there was a huge magic beast underneath the Haven, attacking.

The beast was very enormous, almost as large as the Swordfish. Its body was filled with scales, with a full set of canine teeth on its mouth. One could understand at a glance that this was a formidable magic beast.

Seeing the ship attack the Haven, Zhao Hai immediately called Jinan. Jinan saw the beast's shape and immediately exclaimed, "Young master, that is a Blade Scale Whale, a literal headache swimming in the sea. It's water element beast, about 6th rank, with a strong attacking capability. If he were to directly attack, a ship like the Swordfish would certainly get breached. Moreover, even if its magic attacks cannot penetrate the Haven's thick hull. It still had saw-like scales that could rip it easily. It was an easy task for this beast to rip apart a ship's iron armor. It has a nickname, Iron Armor Assassin."

Zhao Hai nodded, then he said, "Can arrow turtles deal with it?"

Jinan shook his head and said, "I don't know, my understanding regarding marine magic beasts is not much. Like how I have no idea about the weakness of this Blade Scale Whale."

Zhao Hai nodded and didn't say more. He just released large quantity of arrow turtles and ordered them to attack the whale.

Although the Blade Scale Whale was very strong, it couldn't maneuver easily because of its large build. Compared to its size, the arrow turtles were a lot small, but they also had a strong defense. More importantly, attacks from Arrow Turtles aren't that weak.

Zhao Hai released about 200 arrow turtles. When these turtles reached the water, they immediately swarmed toward the Blade Scale Whale and attacked it with the horn on their shells.

The whale obviously dreaded the arrow turtles, so it stopped its attacks on the Haven and went to retreat. The arrow turtles wouldn't allow this to happen, so they immediately surrounded the whale and collectively attacked it.

Zhao Hai saw that these arrow turtles seem to be the whale's weakness. When the horns of the turtles pierced the whale's armor, blood spurted out. The whale thrashed about repeatedly, but it couldn't do anything amidst the attacks of the turtles.

Zhao Hai looked blankly at what was happening, he didn't think that these arrow turtles would actually best a large beast like this Blade Scale Whale.

Laura and the others were also surprised upon seeing this. Before long, the whale succumbed to the attacks and stopped moving, its body sank towards the seabed.

Seeing this, Zhao Hai immediately opened the Space and absorbed both the arrow turtles and the whale's body inside.

After the seawater entered the space, a prompt could be suddenly heard, "Wounded whale-type variation beast detected. Unable to decide on the level, requesting the host to treat the beast as soon as possible."

Zhao Hai immediately had the Blade Scaled Whale healed. But he didn't expect that the cost of healing the whale actually took up 200 thousand gold coins, it made Zhao Hai grieve. Fortunately, he managed to loot tens of millions of coins from Grand Duke

Lionheart before, otherwise, he would have to give up on the whale.

Chapter 377 – Little Monkey

Just after the Blade Scale Whale was cured, the Space immediately issued a prompt, “Whale-type variation Magic Beast Detected. Strong attack strength, level 30, currently cannot raise inside the Space. Digitizing... can now be purchased in Spatial Shop.”

This change in the prompt was caused by the fact that the Ranch now turns animals into magic beasts. This was why the prompt said ‘magic beast’ instead of ‘beast’.

However, the Space was currently unable to raise Blade Scale Whale, it may be because of the lack of a saltwater pool. This aspect was something Zhao Hai didn’t understand, he had already absorbed quite a lot of seawater into the Space, so why didn’t it have a saltwater pool?

Zhao Hai wasn’t that excited anymore. Since the whale couldn’t be bred inside the Ranch, there was no point in just storing it inside the Space, so Zhao Hai released the whale and had it escort the Haven while they headed towards their destination. This time, the whale didn’t attack the Haven, it just guarded the ship like a submarine as it followed.

Zhao Hai was finally relieved and had Jinan continue on towards Ape Island. Although the Blade Scale Whale couldn’t deal with the Arrow Turtles, it was still formidable. The whale was still a tyrant at sea, it was just unfortunate for the creature that its weakness was the Arrow Turtles. While it was helpless against the turtles, the other marine magic beasts generally wouldn’t dare attack it. With the whale guarding the Haven, there were no other attacks that came afterwards.

Two days later, Zhao Hai could already see Ape Island from the horizon. It was just like how it was described, you could clearly see from the island’s silhouette the shape of a lifelike giant ape with its

mouth open and covered with green fur.

Zhao Hai made the whale as well as the turtles scout the surroundings, he wanted to know where the route to enter the island was.

Although they were still at some distance away from the island, the group was still careful because of the large number of reefs on the seabed as well as rocks that were stretching out. If they didn't choose their route properly, the ship would hit some obstructions and sink.

After two days of scouting, Zhao Hai finally located the route heading towards the island. However, Jinan's information was incorrect; the route towards Ape Island was not one, but three. The first route was relatively wide compared to the other two which were quite narrow.

A five-masted ship like Haven could head towards the island using the wide route. Of the other two narrow routes, one could accommodate the Swordfish, while the other one could only allow smaller boats to pass.

At the same time, these routes weren't straight, they were all meandering. Now Zhao Hai understood why Jinan's story told about needing to have a Water Mage in order to navigate the route. At that time, it was necessary to have a Water Mage to help turn the bow of the ship, otherwise the ship would certainly hit a reef.

Zhao Hai didn't care about any of these, after determining the routes, Zhao Hai immediately commanded Jinan to set sail towards the widest one. While the ship was travelling, Zhao Hai was also paying close attention to his monitor, using water element spells whenever necessary.

Along with the ship, the Blade Scale Whale was also closely following behind. If there was an attack, the whale would guard the ship, making the route a lot safer.

Although the route was not long, Zhao Hai's group still spent a full day travelling before arriving at the shores of Ape Island. What surprised Zhao Hai was the fact that there was already a dock present here. Moreover, the dock wasn't small, it could accommodate ten ships just like the Haven simultaneously.

Between the dock and Ape Island, the reefs weren't present anymore. The reef outside seemed to be like a planet's meteorite belt. After passing through that belt, you could then travel safely all around the island. Thinking about those reefs, Zhao Hai felt something very odd.

After the Haven stopped, Zhao Hai disembarked from the ship and went to the dock. Zhao Hai examined the dock carefully and saw that the dock was actually formed naturally, there were no traces of artificial construction. This astonishing natural dock seemed to be a structure that was only unique to Ape Island.

Around a hundred meters away from the dock was a forest. The trees on the forest were very big, not only are they big, their trunks also looked very solid. On each of the trees hang watermelon sized fruits. With the green leaves and fruits, the scenery looked quite nice.

Laura liked the scenery that she just saw, she turned to Zhao Hai and said, "Elder Brother Hai, it's quite beautiful here, I like it. This place would be a very good location for a base. We also need to make a house, I'd love to stay here."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Good, we'll settle here. But first, we need to go and take a look around. Didn't they say that this island had formidable ape-type magic beasts?"

Laura nodded, then Zhao Hai led the group towards the island. Upon reaching the trees, Zhao Hai picked a fruit up using a wind blade before sending it to the Space. There were a lot of fauna that could be seen in the island, so Zhao Hai wanted to go around and absorb them into the Space hoping they'll be enough to upgrade it.

After the fruit entered the Space, a prompt was immediately transmitted. Although the fruit's origin was unique, the Farm still needed a lot more plants to level up. Therefore, the fruit wasn't able to upgrade the Space.

Zhao Hai already expected this to happen, so he wasn't particularly disappointed. He continued on while picking out some local plants. It was not only Zhao Hai who went and grabbed something, everybody was doing it.

At this time, Laura suddenly noticed a small golden figure at a tree in front of her. She looked at it carefully before seeing that it was actually a little ape. The monkey was not tall, it may not even reach a meter in height if it fully stood. With its golden fur, the little ape looked very cute.

Laura liked how the little monkey looked, so she quickly pulled Zhao Hai, who was still looking for plants, over and said, "Brother Hai, look, that little monkey is so cute."

As the little ape looked at Laura, it revealed a curious look. The ape didn't express fear, but instead a genuine interest. This struck Laura's heart a second time.

Zhao Hai looked at the little monkey and couldn't help but feel that this small ape wasn't simple. In the end, he placed that thought to the back of his mind, after all, the little monkey wasn't showing any hostility.

Still, because of those feelings, Zhao Hai didn't attempt to capture the monkey but instead he took out a fruit from the Space and threw it towards the creature.

Shue was too late to stop Zhao Hai's action. He immediately stood guard in front of Zhao Hai as he said, "Young Master, you should be careful. If you just throw things like that, he will think that you are attacking him. He might attack back." But Zhao Hai didn't think that this was the case.

And true to Zhao Hai's thoughts, the little monkey understood Zhao Hai's intentions. The monkey seemed to feel that Zhao Hai wasn't hostile, so he caught the fruit and opened its mouth to take a bite.

The fruit was an apple gotten from the tree Zhao Hai used to plant in the Space. The apples weren't very large, but they taste very good.

So after the little monkey took a bite of the apple, he immediately shrieked with excitement. He quickly finished the apple in his hands and stared at Zhao Hai with eyes full of expectation, it came out really cute.

Zhao Hai couldn't stand the look on the little monkey's eyes, so he immediately took out a few more apples and threw them towards the monkey one by one. The monkey surprisingly knew how to handle those apples. As it catches an apple, it placed it on a branch before proceeding to catch another one. This cleverness and wit gave Zhao Hai a new understanding towards the monkey.

Laura and the other two women saw that the monkey was so smart and became quite happy. So they took some apples from Zhao Hai and threw them nonstop towards the monkey. Soon there were more than 20 apples all around the small ape.

Zhao Hai stopped taking the fruits out and looked at the little monkey, he wanted to see what the small ape wanted to do next. Seeing that Zhao Hai and the others weren't throwing any more apples, the monkey gave two shrieks before picking up the apples and eating them quickly. Zhao Hai looked at the little animal and couldn't help but laugh, the pile of apples were bigger than its figure, how could it be possible for the little monkey to finish all of it.

However, the little monkey made Zhao Hai's group dumbfounded. More than 20 apples were consumed by the monkey in a blink of an eye. The small ape didn't care about Zhao Hai and

the others' expression, it just shouted while on top of the tree as if wanting Zhao Hai to throw more fruits upward.

Zhao Hai looked at the petite figure of the little monkey. When he thought about the 20 plus apples piled together, he couldn't help but stay stunned; not only him, but Laura and the others as well. They didn't think that this small monkey could eat so much.

After a short while, Laura recovered as she turned her head to Zhao Hai and said, "Brother Hai, am I hallucinating or did that little monkey just eat all those apples by himself?"

Zhao Hai gave a dull nod and replied, "You're not hallucinating, all of those apples were truly eaten. But it is strange, did it really eat those apples? Or was it a strange ability. How could it possibly eat all of those apples."

When the little monkey saw that Zhao Hai and the others didn't respond and just stood there while speaking with each other, it became anxious. It gave a shriek as it jumped repeatedly. Seeing the monkey's behaviour, Zhao Hai had no choice but to take out even more apples. But this time, he didn't throw them up into the tree. Zhao Hai just held the apple in his hand and said, "You want to eat? Come and get it."

The monkey apparently understood Zhao Hai's words, but it also knew that this was an obvious setup. At the same time, it couldn't bear giving up the apple, so it just held its ear and cheek against the tree's surface anxiously.

Seeing the monkey's appearance, Zhao Hai couldn't help but laugh. Still, he wanted to see if the little monkey was willing to jump down and take the apple. Just as Zhao Hai laughed, a golden shadow was suddenly seen coming straight down from the tree. When Zhao Hai came to his senses, he immediately went to grab the apple in his hand. However, what met Zhao Hai was empty air. This entire event just took place in a blink of an eye.

The group was stunned, especially Shun. He had the skills of an

assassin, and was also famous for his abilities. But seeing that he was much slower than the little monkey, he couldn't help but feel a bit of fear. If the little monkey didn't go for the apple but instead went for Zhao Hai, the young master would surely be in grave danger.

Zhao Hai stared at his own hand, then he looked up at the proud looking monkey who was holding the apple as he muttered, "This guy's thieving skills are very good."

The little monkey immediately caught Zhao Hai's interest, he immediately took out another apple and held it towards the monkey.

Possibly because of its earlier success, the monkey looked more confident this time. After eating the apple that it just grabbed earlier, the monkey stared at the apple on Zhao Hai's hand and prepared itself to snatch the fruit.

Laura and the others turned quiet as they stood still and carefully observed the small monkey. This time, another golden light flashed before the apple on Zhao Hai's hand vanished and as the monkey returned to the tree. Zhao Hai and the others simply couldn't follow the monkey's movements with their eyes.

The little monkey shrieked proudly twice while it ate the apple. Afterwards, it gave Zhao Hai another shriek, obviously wanting to have more apples. It seemed like it also liked to play this kind of game.

Zhao Hai looked at the little creature and smiled, once again, he took out another apple and raised his hand towards the monkey.

As Zhao Hai held the apple, there was a flash of excitement on his eyes. Just as expected, the little monkey's confidence became bigger and bigger. So just as the monkey was about to snatch the apple Zhao Hai took out, a spatial rift suddenly appeared as it covered both Zhao Hai and the little monkey, both of them disappeared.

When Zhao Hai entered the Space with the little monkey, the Space immediately gave a prompt, “Monkey-type variation magic beast detected. Level 40. Can raise inside the space, consumes two feed per hour. Time of Maturation: 20 hours. Can produce ten times, five offspring each time, taking eight hours of pregnancy. Digitizing... can now be purchased on the Spatial Shop.”

“Space Ranch reached the requirements for level up. Ranch upgraded to level 16. Congratulations to the host for the effort.”

Surprise, this was an absolute surprise for Zhao Hai. He didn’t expect that when he lead the monkey to the Space, the Ranch would unexpectedly get upgraded. Moreover, the little monkey was actually higher levelled than the Blade Scale Whale. It really did seem like the apes in the island weren’t that simple.

When the little monkey reached this strange place, it felt quite confused. But because of the Space’s ability, the little monkey immediately recognized Zhao Hai as a friend. It hopped onto Zhao Hai’s shoulder and squeaked, it also took the apple that Zhao Hai was holding before and presented it back to him.

Zhao Hai liked this clever little guy. He didn’t expect that the monkey would be this adorable, even giving him an apple. This made Zhao Hai surprised, this little guy understood human thoughts too well. Zhao Hai laughed as he carried the little guy and gave him a specially large apple to eat.

Chapter 378 – Little Jin

The little creature understood Zhao Hai, so it just stayed there on Zhao Hai's bosom while munching on the apple on its hand.

At this time, Zhao Hai called Laura and the others in. When Laura and the others saw Zhao Hai carrying the little monkey like a child, they became excited and immediately came and surrounded the two. Zhao Hai smiled and gave the little monkey to Laura. Laura became excited and hugged the little creature snugly, the monkey knew about Zhao Hai's relationship with Laura and the others, so he didn't show any hostility, it just lied down peacefully on Laura's bosom while eating his apple.

Then Cai'er came in while flying, she went towards the monkey and gave it a curious look. As the monkey was returning Cai'er's curious gaze, Cai'er suddenly extended a vine and snatched the apple that was on the little monkey's hand.

The monkey stared blankly, then it became quite angry, it shrieked as it came down from Laura's arms. It pursued Cai'er while the other party ran off with a face full of smiles.

This event made the Space quite lively, Cai'er laughing, the little monkey shrieking, Zhao Wen also joined the fun. The Space expressed a good vitality, this was something Zhao Hai and the others didn't experience before.

After a while, Zhao Hai stopped the group and led them back outside. Naturally, the little monkey also came while carrying a big apple on its hand. Zhao Hai also gave the little ape a name, he called it Little Jin.

Once they were out of the Space, Little Jin looked at his surroundings then shouted twice and seemed to get excited. He jumped down from Zhao Hai's shoulder and pointed his other hand which didn't hold an apple. Little Jin pointed forward, Zhao Hai and the others didn't know what the little monkey wanted to

do.

Seeing that the group didn't move, Little Jin kept shrieking and pointing towards a certain direction. Zhao Hai could only proceed towards the direction Little Jin pointed to. The little monkey quieted down and resumed munching on the apple.

At this moment, a 'bang' could be heard in some place that the group couldn't see. Zhao Hai and the others stopped their footsteps and looked forward.

They remembered that Jinan had told them that this island had fierce magic beasts, hearing this sound made them think of those magic beasts.

When they stopped, Little Jin acted up again and began squeaking. Zhao Hai had no choice but proceed onward.

This made Zhao Hai unable to go out to collect some unique fauna since the little monkey would call him over and over if he stopped. This made Zhao Hai and the others quite speechless.

But when Zhao Hai felt that Little Jin was leading them to a certain place, he was both anxious and interested. He wanted to see where Little Jin wanted to take them.

Even after walking about three li(1.5km), they didn't encounter any other magic beasts, which surprised Zhao Hai. At the same time, Zhao Hai didn't expect that there were no other type of tree other than the tall and sturdy Bread trees that they had been passing along. This was quite strange for the group.

At this moment, a rustling sound could be heard in front of them. Zhao Hai and the other couldn't help but stop, then they saw several giant shadows approaching from the forest in front of them.

When the figures became clear, Zhao Hai saw that they were actually a huge number of apes. They were crawling on all fours, just like ordinary apes. They had shorter hind legs compared to

their foreleg. This made look like they were bowing as they moved forward. But they still towered at about 7 to 8 meters high, might even reach 10 meters if they stood up straight.

Zhao Hai and the others all stood still, they knew that they had met those magic beasts that Jinan had informed them about. Looking at the apes in front of him, Zhao Hai knew that they should have formidable fighting strength. They looked very much like 'King Kong' that was often seen in movies back on Earth.

Looking at their towering bodies as well as their bulging muscles, Zhao Hai didn't doubt even for the moment the formidability of these magic beasts. The gorillas back on Earth weren't as big but they were still hailed for their strength. So how powerful would these hulking apes in front of them be?

Seeing these big fellows, Zhao Hai became alert. While holding onto Little Jin, he held his Ghost Staff. Shue and Shun also stood at Zhao Hai side while Laura and the other women stood behind them.

When the apes saw Zhao Hai and the others stunned, they screamed out while beating their chests. Like how gorillas normally express their fighting stance.

At this time, while Zhao Hai and the others were anxious, a golden light suddenly jumped towards the head of an ape. Zhao Hai was surprised, he knew that the golden streak was certainly Little Jin.

Sure enough, Little Jin was sitting on the shoulder of another ape; his entire body not even as big as the ape's head. When Zhao Hai saw this, his expression changed as he shouted, "Little Jin, come back here."

Little Jin didn't listen to him, he reached out his small hand and tapped the head of the ape who was beating its chest.

What happened next shocked Zhao Hai's group. When Little Jin

tapped the head of the ape, it immediately calmed down and expressed a sad look, like how it looks when an elder disciplines a child.

Zhao Hai and the others stared blankly at what was happening, they couldn't make any sense of it. Little Jin was a small golden monkey while the other was a hulking gorilla. Why did a gorilla get obedient when its head was pat by a golden monkey? Are they doing a play?

At this time, Zhao Hai noticed that it was not only the gorilla that behaved themselves, all the other apes also calmed down and looked at Little Jin obediently.

Zhao Hai just stood there dumbfoundedly looking at the group of apes in front of him. He couldn't believe what he just saw, this made the group's mind quite dizzy.

At this time, more apes came out of the forest. Zhao Hai noticed a peculiarity on these apes. They could be currently classified into different types. There were orange gorillas that were giants much like King Kong. Another were those whose fur turned silvery white, with a bit shorter figure, about five or six meters tall. There were also apes with fur that was entirely silver, with bodies that were even shorter; about three or four meters. Then there was the last type where the fur was both silver and gold that was even much smaller, about a meter in height; there were two of them.

The strange part came from the fact that the smaller the ape was, the higher their status seemed to be. When the apes saw Little Jin, they all put out an obedient appearance. It seems like Little Jin held the highest status among the apes present here.

This made Zhao Hai surprised, he didn't understand their current power structure. Why did these apes made it this way? Weren't magic beasts supposed to place their strongest member at the top of its hierarchy? Then why was this present scene happening?

At this time, Little Jin jumped back to Zhao Hai's shoulder and shrieked as it pointed its finger forward. The other apes immediately gave way to Zhao Hai and the others. Little Jin kept a smug look while standing at Zhao Hai shoulder, looking quite aloof.

Zhao Hai and the others were stumped as they looked at each other. Even though they didn't understand what was going on, they knew that Little Jin wouldn't think of harming them. So since these apes listened to the little monkey, it would be fair to say that they would also refrain from hurting humans. In the end, the group just followed the direction that Little Jin pointed towards.

Slowly, the surroundings got higher and higher. Zhao Hai and the others were also putting forth more effort in walking. At this time, Little Jin called over some apes as he tugged on Zhao Hai's clothes and pointed towards the gorillas. Zhao Hai didn't know what his new friend was planning.

Seeing that Zhao Hai and the others weren't comprehending, Little Jin jumped on the back of a gorilla and gestured towards Zhao Hai. The other gorillas understood Little Jin's intention and immediately grabbed the humans and effortlessly placed them on their backs. Zhao Hai and the others didn't resist, they knew that they weren't in any danger.

The apes' back were very large, about 2 meters wide and 4 meters long, all in all about 8 square meters. Zhao Hai and the others didn't find it hard to find a place to either sit or stand.

Although the gorillas were crawling, their backs were extremely steady. Adding on the wool on their backs, the ride was very comfortable.

At this time, Laura and the others were also on other apes' backs. Shun and Shue shared an orange furred ape, and while there were two of them on the back of an ape, it wasn't crowded at all. The ape didn't seem to mind some extra weight on its back, it just

resumed walking without any indication of slowing down. This gave Zhao Hai a new understanding with regards to the strength of these apes.

One must know that the group was currently heading up a mountain, the bodies of Zhao Hai and the others effectively added around 300 jin to the apes' backs. Even 3rd rank horse magic beasts wouldn't be able to make this kind of trip, but these apes were actually doing it effortlessly, they were quite strong.

Their altitude got higher and higher as they quickly approached the summit. What Zhao Hai saw on the top of the mountain was actually a single tree, an especially gargantuan Bread tree.

The Bread tree was so tall that Zhao Hai couldn't see its crown. It was also very thick, Zhao Hai felt that this tree's diameter shouldn't be any smaller than 100 meters. Zhao Hai only saw this kind of tree back at Earth, and it was on the movie 'Avatar'. But this tree was a bit different, it was something that Zhao Hai hadn't seen yet.

At the base of the tree was a huge hole, about thirty meters tall and ten meters wide. The apes carried Zhao Hai's group to enter the hole.

After entering the tree hole, Zhao Hai and the others were stunned. They didn't expect to see such a scene upon entering.

Chapter 379 – Strange Tree

Inside the tree hole were compartments filled with hay. And it was obvious that it wasn't just there naturally, it looks like an ape's bedroom. Moreover, the compartment wasn't unsightly; it was very clean.

This compartment might not be very big, maybe only 20 square meters. But all around the tree hole were numerous compartments that belonged to apes. Inside some of those compartments were some small black monkeys as well as female ones.

The place looked like an upscaled ant's nest, it was just that ants weren't the ones living in it but instead apes. Zhao Hai calculated that inside this tree hole alone, there should be around a thousand apes. It was a very terrifying magic beast tribe.

Zhao Hai looked upwards and was shocked about the sheer space inside the tree hole. It was about a hundred meters high with compartments all around it, the scene was extremely spectacular.

Laura saw the scene and couldn't help but be in awe, "This is really quite breathtaking. Brother Hai, couldn't you see? This place looks like a small city."

This statement wasn't an exaggeration that Laura just threw out. The place was truly magnificent, the tree could be considered as the capital of Little Jin's kingdom. His constituents should be these apes while the entire island might be their territory.

Little Jin gave a few shrieks, then some apes came to take away the hay on the ground. The revealed surface was very clean, Zhao Hai could even faintly see the wood grains on the floor.

Little Jin jumped down from Zhao Hai's body, then it gave another few shrieks to have the gorillas carrying Zhao Hai's group place them on the ground. Then the apes walked out of the hole while leaving some small apes on the ground, some were even

crawling all over the place.

To be honest, these small apes weren't as cute as Little Jin, but they're still quite attractive. This made Laura's, Meg's, and Nier's eyes shine. Women generally have little tolerance towards adorable creatures.

Little Jin didn't care about those small apes, he just left those young ones to their own. Zhao Hai didn't understand what Little Jin was intending to do.

At this time, some silver apes came while holding some breadfruit in their hands. When they arrived, they presented those fruits in front of Zhao Hai. There were also some apes that held shells with some sort of liquid inside of them. What surprised Zhao Hai was that the liquid in those shells gave off a scent of liquor.

Little Jin gave a few shrieks as he took a breadfruit and gave it directly to Zhao Hai who understood what the little monkey meant. Little Jin wanted Zhao Hai to eat the fruit.

Zhao Hai received the basketball sized fruit. Currently, the skin of the fruit was very hard, so he made an effort to knock it down on the ground before peeling the fruit and revealing the white pulp inside.

What surprised Zhao Hai was when the pulp came in contact with the air, it quickly expanded and exhibited the scent of bread.

Zhao Hai stared for a moment before placing the fruit near his mouth and took a single bite. The fruit's flesh was very fluffy and it tasted just like bread. This surprised Zhao Hai even more.

Zhao Hai had heard of the monkey bread tree on earth, he heard that it was a type of tree with high yield. For their fruits to be eaten, they needed to be roasted. But this bread fruit that he just ate unexpectedly didn't need roasting. It just inflated itself and gave the appearance of bread, and a big one at that. Zhao Hai feared the he would need to eat for an entire day before he could

finish the entire fruit.

Laura and the others looked at Zhao Hai's actions. It was the first time that they had seen such a fruit. At this time, Little Jin also shrieked a few times while pointing towards the shells on the ground.

Zhao Hai curiously took the shell and drunk the liquid it held inside. Upon entering his stomach, Zhao Hai felt an acidic taste, what made it strange was that the liquor inside those shells had the same flavor as beer.

Zhao Hai didn't make beer, nobody in the continent did. Originally, Zhao Hai thought that he would be able to get the process of fermenting beer after a lot of experiments. But who would've thought that on such an isolated island, a few apes took out a beer-tasting liquid for him to drink. This gave Zhao Hai a surprise.

He curiously looked at the liquid, the liquid truly did have a beer's flavor, although it was not very pure, it was genuinely beer. Zhao Hai couldn't help himself and took another drink.

Looking at Zhao Hai's expression, Laura and the others became curious. They also opened a fruit and ate some before drinking the beer, they felt very good.

Zhao Hai placed the shell down and turned to look at Little Jin. He couldn't help but laugh and said, "Little Jin, Little Jin, you really are my lucky star. Hahaha. Fantastic, this thing is fantastic."

Seeing Zhao Hai getting excited about the beer, Little Jin also gave a few excited shrieks. On the other hand, Laura and the others were more interested in the bread, not quite so on the beer.

Zhao Hai and the others were still hungry, so they continued to eat bread and sip some beer. At the same time, Zhao Hai took out a lot of apples for Little Jin. The small ape was very excited as he distributed the apples to the other apes.

However, it became apparent that even though Zhao Hai's apples were quite big, they were insufficient for the hulking apes. When the gorillas opened their mouths and tossed an apple inside, the fruit immediately vanished after only a few chews.

Zhao Hai shook his head and felt helpless, then he gave Little Jin more apples. This time, he took out a lot more apples, about ten thousand jins worth. Little Jin became incomparably excited as he continued to distribute the apples to the apes.

Before long, the ten thousand jins of apples disappeared into the mouths of the apes. With an excited face, each and every one of those apes looked at Zhao Hai, clearly expecting more food.

Zhao Hai shook his head and smiled bitterly. He turned his head to Little Jin and said, "Little Jin, we'll have to eat later. I want to take a look at the entire island." Little Jin probably understood Zhao Hai's words since he gave a set of shrieks to make the group of apes disperse, only leaving a several few.

Zhao Hai and the others climbed to the back of the gorillas. Then Little Jin lead the group all around the island. When they were coming down from the mountain, Little Jin pointed at some bread trees and gave a few shrieks as the apes climbed the trees.

At this time, Zhao Hai could faintly smell the scent of beer coming from those trees. He couldn't believe that there was actually beer inside those bread trees.

The apes took Zhao Hai and the others to climb one of the trees. The tree had a hole in it that was blocked tightly by a piece of bark that seemed like cork. The gorilla that Zhao Hai was riding on went forward and turned the wooden cork that was blocking the hole to reveal that there was indeed beer inside.

After seeing this, Zhao Hai nodded, then they continued on to their journey. About halfway down the mountain, they saw a small pool with a spring acting as its source. Obviously this was a place where the apes would get some drinking water.

Zhao Hai and the others walked towards other places. The island wasn't that large, only about ten thousand mu. The most common tree present were those bread trees while other types of fauna were quite few.

When Zhao Hai thought that there weren't any more interesting places to visit, Little Jin suddenly brought them to a root cavern. This cavern was blocked by a bread tree. If not for Little Jin guiding the group, Zhao Hai wouldn't have been able to find this place easily.

As soon as the group entered the cavern, they were shocked. This was because the cavern was not in line with their expectations of a moist and narrow cave. This one was unexpectedly quite dry, moreover it was very big, about a football field's worth of floor area. The space inside was also about 20 meters high. There was also the passage in front which was 6 meters wide and 20 meters high, which seemed to become higher and higher as they go through.

Zhao Hai was curious as he made Little Jin lead the group inside. After crossing the passage, they were met with an even bigger cavern. The cavern was very big and also quite dark, even though light couldn't reach this part of the cave, the surface of the cave wasn't cold; it instead was very warm. The most important thing about this cavern was the tree growing at the very center, the tree gave off a faint golden radiance.

The reason why this cavern was quite dark with only a little bit of light inside was this tree. Although this tree looked like a normal bread tree, it was very short and wasn't very stout. There were also fruits present that were like breadfruit, but these fruits were smaller and were gold colored; it also seem to exude a faint light.

While Zhao Hai curiously examined the tree, Little Jin jumped down and went directly to the plant. He examined the fruits before picking some from the center of the tree and handed the fruits to

Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai received the fruit and carefully looked at it. The fruit looks like a miniaturized version of the breadfruit, it didn't have any other redeeming quality. The fruit was only the same size as Zhao Hai's fist, with the familiar hard skin surrounding it. When Zhao Hai was about to bite into the fruit, Little Jin screamed and seized Zhao Hai's hand with enough strength that Zhao Hai couldn't get it loose

Zhao Hai looked confused at Little Jin, he didn't know why the little monkey gave him the fruit only to prohibit him from eating it. Little Jin looks at Zhao Hai and quickly made some movements, the little ape held its hand and made a blossoming action.

Zhao Hai understood the signal, it was possible that Little Jin wasn't describing blossoming but was instead referring to an explosion. Zhao Hai held the fruit and said, "You're saying that this fruit can explode?"

Little Jin shook its head, he pointed to the fruit and then to his mouth, then made an explosive expression. Zhao Hai said, "You're saying that the human who eats this fruit will explode?"

Little Jin excitedly nodded. He pointed to himself, grasping his fur, then pointed to the other apes' fur, then to the fruit, and lastly back to himself.

This made Zhao Hai stare for a while. Seeing Zhao Hai unable to understand, Little Jin gestured a few more times. Finally, Zhao Hai seemed to understand, he looked at Little Jin and said, "You're saying that if they eat this fruit, then eventually they are going to look like you?" He said as he pointed to the gorillas then to Little Jin.

Chapter 380 – Pirates

Little Jin nodded, then shook his head. He pointed at the gorilla, then outside, then back to himself. Zhao Hai's current understanding was increased, he looked at Little Jin and said, "You're saying that those gorillas will slowly turn into silvery white then semi-gold, and when they eat the fruit, they would become like you? Otherwise, they will explode?"

Little Jin excitedly nodded, Zhao Hai's eyes lit up and with an intention moved the group to return to the Space along with several other apes.

The moment they entered the Space, a prompt was heard, "Special plant fruit detected. Contains Metal element energy. After consuming, may develop Metal element abilities. Each seed takes up ten mu of land, 8th rank plant. Ripening time, 36 hours, ten fruits each time. Interval between fruit production, 12 hours."

"Space has met upgrade requirements. Space levelled up to level 25. Congratulations for the host's effort."

Zhao Hai froze for a moment, then he looked at the small fruit on his hand with pleasant surprise. He didn't expect the little fruit to have such capabilities, it could actually provide people with abilities. Additionally, what made Zhao Hai even more happy was the fact that the Space had risen to level 25, a very huge surprise to Zhao Hai.

After a while, Zhao Hai recovered as he laughed and held Little Jin. He felt that the little ape was his lucky star. Not only did it show Zhao Hai beer, he even gave him this kind of fruit. The fruit unexpectedly upgraded the Space by three levels. Three levels! How long ago did the Space experience this kind of upgrade? This event was extremely beautiful.

Laura and the others expressed excitement, they also didn't expect the Space to increase by three levels. Now they were even

close to the goal of level 30.

Although Little Jin didn't know why Zhao Hai was very happy, he also expressed his glee when he saw that Zhao Hai was ecstatic. He kept giving happy shrieks while in Zhao Hai's arms.

Zhao Hai went out of the Space and looked at the tree. He gazed at a tree again and reckoned that it shouldn't have a name, nobody in the continent should have been able to see this tree. Zhao Hai didn't think of moving the tree, the Space can already plant the tree by itself so there was no need to uproot it. Zhao Hai just gave the tree a name, he called it the Goldmetal Tree while the fruit of the tree was named Goldmetal Fruit.

As they walked out of the cavern, Little Jin took them to yet another part of the island. After a short while, they arrived at a cave located at the opposite side of the island, the surroundings were filled with bread trees. Only the entrance to the cavern wasn't blocked by anything.

Arriving at the cavern, Zhao Hai and the others stared blankly. It was because this cavern was also a natural harbor, different to the dock outside. The entire cavern was the harbor but the only kinds of ships that could reach here were three-masted ships, five-masted ships were simply unable to enter.

This was a harbor, not a dock, Zhao Hai looked at the surroundings with an investigative gaze. It was good that there were no ships here since this small island was a natural base.

The group came out of the cavern and returned to Little Jin's home, the huge bread tree. Zhao Hai put out another huge pile of apples for Little Jin's companions, this was Zhao Hai's way of thanking them. His harvest in this island was simply too big, not only did the Ranch level up twice, the Farm also rose by three. He also found out about the bread tree as well as a possibility to learn how to ferment beer later. These harvests were extremely important to Zhao Hai.

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After coming out of Little Jin's nest, Zhao Hai and the others returned to the shore. Naturally, Little Jin also came with them. Zhao Hai already decided to use this place as his base, but he scraped his plan of building some structures here. When he saw Little Jin, he thought that he would be acting in bad faith if he started to cut some bread trees to accommodate some buildings. Those bread trees were the food source of Little Jin's tribe. So instead of constructing some structures at this place, Zhao Hai placed his fifth transmission point on the island.

Then he continued on to load his two ships with Fire Fishes, vegetables, grains and other things. The changed Swordfish was outfitted and modified to solely transport Fire Fishes.

Fire Fishes were very fragile, they needed to have a certain temperature of water to thrive in. This condition fully reflected on how Zhao Hai's Swordfish was modified. Firstly, the cabin was changed to accomodate freshwater. The freshwater pool was separated into two compartments, enabling the application with fire magic to be used separately. While the fire fishes were staying in one compartment, the other one would be heated up so when the other pool's temperature gets low, the fire fishes could simply get transferred to maintain the optimum temperature of their surroundings. This method would be used repeatedly to keep the fishes alive.

Naturally, this method was just an excuse. Zhao Hai wouldn't actually raise his fire fishes inside those cabins. He just made that to deceive people, only when he arrives at Sky Water City will Zhao Hai place the fishes inside the ship.

The modification on his five-masted ship was more relaxed. The storage for vegetables, grains, fruit oil and other products were already present inside the Haven, so they only installed a few additions on the ship. Zhao Hai loaded the ship with 100 thousand jins of vegetables, another 50 thousand jin of grain, and a varying

amount of other products.

After taking care of these things, Zhao Hai and the others were ready to leave Ape Island. Originally Zhao Hai wanted to leave Little Jin here, after all he was the leader of the tribe and also, Zhao Hai thought that Little Jin would not follow him.

However Little Jin didn't think the same. He confronted Zhao Hai and relayed that he would not stay, so Zhao Hai didn't oppose the little monkey. The transmission point that Zhao Hai placed was directly inside Little Jin's nest. Therefore, if Little Jin wants to return to the island, he could do so anytime. Moreover, there were also some tribesmen that were able to take his place in taking care of the island. Zhao Hai could also monitor the island via the monitor, so he would just send Little Jin back if something happened.

After a short day inside Ape Island, Zhao Hai's group left. But before he left, he made the Blade Scale Whale look after the wide route while he had the arrow turtles take care of the other two narrower routes.

After arranging everything, Zhao Hai's ships departed Ape Island. Zhao Hai was afraid that Little Jin wasn't used to travelling by boat. But contrary to his thoughts, the little monkey was running crazily in all directions, it didn't express any feeling of discomfort at all.

Thus, Zhao Hai didn't specially take care of him, but he still made sure that the little monkey was able to eat everyday as well as return to his tribe to take care of things. Two days later, when they are fairly at a distance from Ape Island, the ships went on and headed towards Sky Water City.

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On this day, while Zhao Hai and the others were sitting on the deck and having lunch, a voice said loudly, "Forty-five degrees on the starboard side, around 20 nautical miles, pirate ship spotted,

heading for us. Unclear intentions, stay alert!”

After hearing the shouts, the undead on the ship moved. They positioned themselves to the ship's weapons and prepared for battle.

Zhao Hai received the food that they were eating and looked at the direction that the sentry described. Little Jin was quite annoyed, he wasn't able to stuff himself full.

Zhao Hai can now understand Little Jin's appetite. Thinking about the size of those gorillas, if they couldn't eat that much, then Zhao Hai would be surprised.

At this time, the sentry shouted loudly again, “20 miles, 45 degrees from the starboard of the Starfish, another pirate ship spotted. The two ships may be part of a fleet. We're possibly the targets.”

Zhao Hai and the others could now see the two ships, they were three-masted battleships. Although the ships looked quite old, they were well maintained and were still very fast. The ships were heading towards them, it looks like they are trying to rob Zhao Hai's group, or maybe occupy their ships.

Zhao Hai didn't have any worries, they had two ships, but Zhao Hai also had two ships. Moreover, there were also some undead. This should be a very easy confrontation.

At this time, the sentry also reported about two ships that came from behind. It was clear that the ships were part of a single fleet. Zhao Hai and the others readied themselves for the battle.

When the four ships came within firing distance, they immediately went to attack Zhao Hai. The undead on Zhao Hai's two ships also immediately launched their counterattack. Loud booms could be heard on the sea, columns of fire were seen, the scene looked just like it was seen in the movies.

Zhao Hai and the others just stayed on the ship and looked at the

pirate ships. Simultaneously, Zhao Hai went to observe the might of the magic cannons. To be honest, the magic cannons disappointed Zhao Hai, they weren't that strong. If a sixth rank warrior were to be hit by the cannon at a certain distance, it was possible for him/her to get away unscathed.

Zhao Hai turned his head to Laura and asked, "Laura, do you think that these pirates have gone mad? What advantage will they get by attacking us? We have an five-masted ironclad ship."

Laura smiled and said, "Then isn't that a big incentive? A five masted ironclad battleship is very formidable, even if these pirates were to lose their four ships, it would be worth it in the end if they manage to occupy the Haven. The ship is extremely valuable. Look, now that they see that their ballistas and magic cannons were useless, they are preparing themselves to board the ship."

It was just like what Laura said, the pirates were already making their ships go closer so that they could board the ships.

Before long, the Haven and the Swordfish was flanked by the four ships. The pirates brought their hooks and girder plates on the sides of their ships and went all out while boarding the ship.

The undead on the Haven and the Swordfish immediately brandished their weapons to defend. Shouts were now heard on the decks of the two ships.

The people on Zhao Hai's group didn't attack. Shue and Shun just stayed by Zhao Hai's side and guarded him while Laura and the other stood behind. They didn't exert any effort in fighting.

Zhao Hai was holding Little Jin on his arms as he calmly looked at the pirates. The pirates' appearance that Zhao Hai had seen on the television was quite similar to the pirates in front of him. They looked very dirty and stank so hard, their beards were also very unkempt. Each and every one of their faces were fierce, certainly not something a good person would show.

But Zhao Hai wasn't afraid of them. He saw that the pirates' present strengths were not very strong. Most of them were about 5th rank with a few 6th ranks mixed in between. It was impossible for the pirates to defeat the undead.

At this time, the peacefully sitting Little Jin on Zhao Hai's arms suddenly jumped down. Zhao Hai froze for a moment before his expression changed, "Little Jin, come back!" He wasn't afraid that the little monkey would get injured, it would be very difficult for those pirates to deal a blow to Little Jin. It was just that Little Jin was too small, Zhao Hai was afraid that the small ape would lose his footing and would fall to the sea.

But at this moment, everybody present froze. Little Jin who jumped down from Zhao Hai's arms gave two shrieks before his body expanded. After a short while, Little Jin became a 20 meter tall giant golden gorilla.

Afterwards, they saw him stretch his claw towards the pirates. As soon as his arm reached the pirates, their bones immediately issued a cracking sound. Then Little Jin gave out a roar and jumped on top of a ship. He grabbed a main mast and then yelped and jerked while slamming it. Surprisingly, the mast that was almost as thick as his body was pulled out. The giant gorilla waved the removed mast around, breaking the other two masts first before slamming itself on the other pirates. The pirates didn't have any time to run, all of them were swept off the ship.

Finally, Little Jin used the mast to smash the ship. With a loud crunch, the ship divided into two under Little Jin's ruthless pounding.

At this time, Little Jin threw away the mast and jumped towards another ship. But Zhao Hai couldn't let that happen as he hastily yelled, "Little Jin, come back, quickly come back."

When Little Jin heard Zhao Hai, he stared for a moment before returning to the Haven. But after he returned to the ship, he stood

in front of Zhao Hai and complained like a child while pointing on the other pirate ships, he roared a lot.

Zhao Hai quickly said, “We’re fine, don’t worry. I’ll immediately deal with them, all right, I also need those ships for myself.” Then he moved his hand as massive numbers of undead came out and stormed the three pirate ships. The pirates onboard weren’t able to run and were killed before Zhao Hai turned them into undead, the battle immediately ended.

When Little Jin saw this, he gave two roars then shrank his body down and returned to his small monkey form. Then he jumped onto Zhao Hai’s arms.

Zhao Hai looked at Little Jin who was in his arms and was returning the gaze with its pair of big eyes. Zhao Hai didn’t know what to say, this cute Little Jin was completely different from the massive gorilla from earlier.

Laura and the other were also blankly staring at Little Jin. They didn’t think that the cute and clever kid that they met would unexpectedly be terrifying when angry.

Chapter 381 – Arriving at the Port

Although Little Jin's rampage caused Zhao Hai to lose one three-masted ship, he didn't mind it. After all, all of those ships were free. The most important thing about the recent event was that he finally knew about Little Jin's strength. Now, Zhao Hai understood why those apes made him their leader, Little Jin was truly the strongest ape of the tribe.

While carrying Little Jin, Zhao Hai laughed and said, "Good job Little Jin, but please do remember to refrain from being angry all the time. You're way too terrifying."

Little Jin looked at Zhao Hai with doubt, he issued two small shrieks, probably asking Zhao Hai why he was not allowed to get angry. Zhao Hai couldn't help but laugh at the sight of Little Jin's cute expression.

Laura and the others also recovered and looked at the appearance of Little Jin. They couldn't help but feel that something was funny. The current Little Jin with its pair of innocent eyes couldn't be any more contrasting to the hulking behemoth of rage earlier, it was quite amusing.

At this time, the three ships were now under Zhao Hai's complete control and thus belonged to Zhao Hai. He immediately removed the pirate flags on the ships and received the three vessels to the Space.

Currently, he didn't want people to know that he had these many ships. It would be very unfavorable for his future expeditions if his other ships were to attract other people's attention.

One shouldn't look at Zhao Hai's smooth progression. The Calci Family only cooperated with Zhao Hai because they didn't see him as a threat. If at present the Calci family were to know that Zhao Hai had the strength to go against them, would they still cooperate with Zhao Hai? Zhao Hai was skeptical about that.

China had a nice saying that said, 'We should not be harmful to other people, but we should be alert to getting harmed'. It encourages people to be both kind and mindful. This was especially true when facing a family as large as the Calci Family. Zhao Hai couldn't help but defend himself, otherwise, he may be bringing himself into disaster.

Great Families never believed in sentiment, so you need to place your benefits right beside theirs. Only in this way could the two of you work together. Otherwise, you wouldn't get any support, any sentiment, and would only be used for benefit.

Thus, Zhao Hai didn't want to show his entire hand. If he wanted Smith to know about the Space, he wouldn't have spent all this time looking for a suitable island for a base. He would have just released the fire fishes then and there.

However, Zhao Hai didn't do so, he just spent a bit of time to make the other people unaware of his hand. Only in this way could Zhao Hai ensure his own security.

Also, it was very lucky for him that he had done so, otherwise he wouldn't have met Little Jin, he wouldn't have seen the Goldmetal Tree. For him, this loss would be too great.

The pirate incident had closed its curtains. When Zhao Hai turned all of the pirates into advanced level undead, he immediately knew the ins and outs of the attack.

The pirates belonged to a pirate group called the Snakehead Pirate Group. The group was composed of the four three-masted ships. This time, they attacked Zhao Hai because they saw him go to Ape Island.

Although Ape Island wasn't a place that seafarers were willing to go to, the island still had its attractive points. The pirates saw Zhao Hai head towards Ape Island and left completely unscathed. Naturally, they wanted to see what Zhao Hai managed to get from the island.

One had to know that sometimes, treasures weren't the most valuable thing in the continent. Sometimes, it would be unique and strange Magic Beasts. The value on those creatures made the risk extremely worth it.

Another important point to the attack was the same as what Laura said, they wanted the Haven. An ironclad five-masted ship was extremely important to a pirate fleet.

However, the pirates didn't think that they would annoy a terrifying magic beast especially Little Jin. When they saw the raging ape, they wanted to offer their surrender, it was just a pity that Zhao Hai didn't give them the opportunity to do so.

After dealing with the pirates, the group resumed their sailing, this time without any other attacks. When common pirates saw the pair of a three-masted ship and an ironclad five-masted ship, they would instantly take their distance and avoid taking the risk.

After a few days of sailing, Zhao Hai's group finally returned to Sky Water City. Once they arrived at the city, Zhao Hai immediately sent someone to inform both Smith and Marriott about getting the supplies. Of those supplies, the most precious were of course the fire fishes and the liquor.

Smith and Marriott were already waiting for this moment for a long time. So they immediately sent their own people to fetch the products. In order to ensure the safety of the fire fishes, they used a carriage fitted with a furnace underneath. The carriage was designed to ensure the optimum temperature of water for the fire fishes to thrive in.

When Smith got on the ship and saw the little fishes swimming around, he reacted as though he saw gold coins were piled in front of him. For the people on the continent, these fire fishes were indeed akin to gold coins.

The continent's output of fire fishes wasn't very high, this was because the environments that allowed these fishes to survive were

quite rare, their food expenses were also quite high. Smith didn't know what Zhao Hai had been feeding these fire fish.

After unloading the products from the ships, Zhao Hai returned to the City Lord's Mansion. Smith warmly received Zhao Hai. This time, when Zhao Hai went to the sea, he didn't send anyone to follow him since it would be useless. The sea was so big, but its surface was quite even. If he had sent someone to follow Zhao Hai from afar, it would only raise the other party's vigilance against Smith, this would make both sides unhappy with each other.

Because Smith didn't send anyone to track Zhao Hai, this gave Zhao Hai sufficient freedom. This also made Zhao Hai feel that their relationship was quite good.

This time, Zhao Hai delivered 50 thousand jin of milk wine, 50 thousand jin of fire fishes, 100 thousand jin of vegetables, 50 thousand jin of grain, and some number of rations.

When these products reached the harbor, it entered the Calci Family's storehouses immediately. Afterwards, Marriott would only need to take his share from the family's storehouse.

What's more important was the fact that aside from Zhao Hai and those directly involved, nobody knew of the products' arrival. The supplies were unloaded on the Calci Family's personal dock, so no common person would be able to see the transport of the goods.

Naturally, there were no impenetrable walls in this world. Soon enough, various powers came to know what were held inside Zhao Hai's ships. Amongst other things, the most intriguing thing for them were the fire fishes, it definitely attracted the other groups' attention.

The fire fishes attracted their attention since the continent's output of fire fishes wouldn't reach 100 thousand jin in one year. But this time, Zhao Hai actually delivered 50,000 jin, which was half of the the continent's output. This caused the powers to cause a commotion.

However, their commotion didn't do anything, they still didn't manage to get a share. The Calci Family and the Shelley family already swallowed the entire supply of fire fish.

The big families still wanted to find Zhao Hai to see whether they could get a slice of the profitable cake. But when they came to it, they realized how hard it was to meet Zhao Hai. Firstly, Zhao Hai was currently inside the Sky Water City, in Calci Family Territory, furthermore he was staying inside the City Lord's Mansion, making meeting him much more difficult. Lastly, Zhao Hai was extremely low key, he rarely went out. Looking for Zhao Hai for a meeting was not an easy thing to do for these powers.

Moreover, they needed to be discreet in wanting to meet Zhao Hai as to not incur the Calci Family's suspicion. If the Calci Family were to know, they will certainly not let them off lightly.

These days, the Calci Family was thriving, mainly because of the fact that they had dealt with Grand Duke Lionheart. This made the common people recognize how formidable the Calci Family was, while the nobles were made aware of other fierce means of the Calci Family.

The propaganda methods that the Calci Family gave them were very easy to use. Although they couldn't see any difference at first, they slowly found out that things became quite different. In the past, when people talked about the Radiant Church, they would describe them in a good, kind, and warm manner. But now it was not the same. When people mentioned the Radiant Church, their expression would change along with their tone of voice.

The nobles were very sensitive about this point, so they immediately knew that the propaganda was working. Upon knowing that it works, the nobles immediately intensified their efforts, they also set-up anti-Radiant Church subjects in their schools. A tide of anti-church sentiment spread out to the entire Rosen Empire.

At this time, the Calci Family suddenly sent Dark Mages to cure people in their territory as well as establishing a Dark Mage history subject on their schools. This was done for the purpose of educating their citizens about Dark Mages.

But the other nobles didn't buy into this method of the Calci Family, they wouldn't just promote Dark Mages for free. However, they learned from Calci Family's action, so they immediately made their own history lessons, but it was not about Dark Mages, instead, they made curriculums for the Mages of other departments such as the fire, wind, water and earth elements. In any case, these Mages also had their own faith, so they made use of this opportunity to compete with the Radiant Church.

After the Calci Family were made aware of this situation, not only were they not angry, they were instead extremely delighted. The nobles were pushing the Mages of other departments to oppose the Radiant Church. If the Radiant Church were to begin suppressing those Mages, it would be equal to making all of the Mages in the continent their enemy, and this would put an extreme amount of pressure on the church.

In fact, the church was already creating pressure for the other Mages. These recent years, the most attractive occupation in the continent was being a Light Mage. So when the children went to school, they would strive to learn Light element magic. But this event on Rosen Empire made the children adore the other Mage departments, this was very good for the other Mages.

Chapter 382 – 5th Successor Enters the Stage

The Radiant Church was ill-prepared for the recent actions of the Rosen Empire. Because of this, they didn't know how to make a turnaround. These years they had been sitting comfortably, they didn't think that the empire would raise their hand against the church.

In the beginning, they didn't realize how terrifying the empire's actions were, but it was too late when they did. Adding on to the fact that they didn't have a great relationship with the Rosen Empire, the time frame for acting against the empire has already passed.

However, the Radiant Church still made its counterattack in the nations aside Rosen Empire. They exerted their influence inside the nations' territories, of course they didn't act against other Mages aside from those who practiced Dark Magic.

But they were destined to be disappointed. The Calci family already took into account the retaliation of the church, so they issued a warning to everyone inside the League of Dark Mages. They instructed their members to immediately escape because the Radiant Church may surround and capture Dark Mages this time.

This time, the Radiant Church conducted some operations against Dark Mages, but their results weren't ideal. They had already tracked the Dark Mages, but those who weren't captured immediately all ran away. It was too late to capture them right now.

Naturally, all of these matters didn't have anything to do with Zhao Hai. This time, the total profit that he gained from his delivery to Sky Water City was about 200 thousand gold coins. This number wasn't small, one should know that a delivery made by an ordinary five-masted ship, even if it was delivered to the

Beastmen Prairie, wouldn't reach this much value.

At this point, nobody has quite any idea about the total value of the goods that Zhao Hai brought. But the great nobles already had a ballpark figure, just by judging from the 50 thousand jin of fire fishes that were supplied, 100 thousand gold coins would suffice. This profit made the other nobles feel giddy.

But nobody could really know the exact price that Zhao Hai placed on the fire fishes. But this didn't curb the other nobles' speculation. In their minds, even if it was worth 50 thousand, not 100 thousand, gold coins, the value was still not a small number. It was necessary to know that a noble family's annual income came to about 100 thousand gold coins, and this was already for large noble families. Small Noble families would find it impossible to gain such an amount of money. For the profits gained from the fire fishes to reach half of a large noble family's annual income was something that the nobles were extremely startled about.

It was not only the Nobles who were surprised by this, even the Calci Family weren't expecting such outcome. It was known that the Calci Family were quite lax in managing their assets. For example, all of the matters in Sky Water city were mostly placed on Smith's hands. Only when a major situation happens would the family step in and make the decisions.

Smith already reported the Fire Fish business to the family, but they didn't believe that 40 thousand Fire Fishes would be supplied each month. This was because, in their opinion, this undertaking was impossible. The continent didn't have a hot spring large enough to satisfy this demand. If hot springs weren't used, the only alternative was to artificially set the temperature where the Fire Fishes were thriving, and this in itself was also impossible since the cost would be too high.

One should know that rearing fire fishes using hot springs would take a very long time. Generally, fire fishes would take two to three years to mature. If immature Fire Fishes were served, the taste

would be very subpar.

Because of all of these reasons, output of Fire Fishes couldn't be consistently measured. But now, someone claimed that they could supply 50 thousand fire fishes per month, this matter was simply too unbelievable.

In any case, this matter wouldn't impact the family negatively. The money would only be paid when the fire fishes arrive, and the equipment built to house the fire fishes could also be used to hold other types of fish. Thus, the family didn't stop the cooperation.

When Zhao Hai finally delivered the fire fishes to Sky Water City, the Calci Family was unable to sit still. They couldn't understand how Zhao Hai could produce such numbers of fire fishes, this matter was too strange.

Naturally, Smith was adamant on not asking about Zhao Hai's methods. He knew that it would be impossible for Zhao Hai to tell him. But the Family actually pressured him to get the methods of fire fish production from Zhao Hai.

This action from the family was extremely disliked by Smith. He thought that the family was acting in bad faith, Zhao Hai was willing to supply the family, but getting the methods from him was already going too far; it was his personal trade secret. In this case, wasn't asking for Zhao Hai's methods the same as digging for his secrets? This was something you do to enemies, not friends. This made Smith strongly oppose the family's decision.

Of the Calci Family, it was Smith who made contact with Zhao Hai the longest. He was very clear about Zhao Hai's disposition. He knew that Zhao Hai would rather die than face humiliation. If the family were really adamant on acquiring Zhao Hai's methods of raising fire fishes, it may even turn Zhao Hai into the family's enemy.

Smith knew how formidable Zhao Hai was. Zhao Hai becoming the family's enemy is no laughing matter. The Calci Family's

power was inferior to the Radiant Church. For Zhao Hai who offended the Church to roam around this freely was testament to Zhao Hai's personal might.

Smith felt that the higher-ups in the family were sometimes quite short-sighted. People like Zhao Hai were more suitable to be befriended, not to used. If they really were to place pressure on Zhao Hai, then someone would certainly suffer.

At the same time, this matter made Smith feel strange. Although the family was short-sighted, they were very tolerant towards Dark Mages. The interests of Dark Mages were generally left alone by the higher-ups. So what happened this time?

Zhao Hai is a member of the League of Dark Mages. Although he wasn't an elder or someone influential, he still provided substantial help to the League. If someone from the family actually went and pressured Zhao Hai, the consequences would certainly be inconceivable.

Smith had thought of one possible reason, this may have been something that his 5th brother concocted in order to gain more benefits.

Calci Family, like all other great families, also had a competition for the the position of Patriarch. Currently, there were four suitable candidates for the position inside Calci Family; The Eldest child Peter, Second child Smith, Fourth child Mike, and the Fifth child Juwan.

Peter was the first-in-line successor of the Family. He's continuously present inside the Family's headquarters helping the Family with their matters. He is also an important member of the League of Dark Mages. One could even say that almost all of the matters regarding the league was handled by him.

The Second Child Smith governs the Family's purse, Sky Water City. Although he hasn't been contributing to the matters at the headquarters, he still did a great job managing Sky Water City. He

had brought tons of gold coins to the family, making his position in the family quite high.

The third child Dillan was an abnormality, he was a cultivation freak. Although he was indeed very formidable, he didn't have the qualities to be a good Patriarch since strength wasn't important in such a position.

The fourth child, Mike, is the diplomat of the Family. He was always present when it came to the Family's social obligations. The fact that the Calci Family didn't have enemies inside the Rosen Empire as well as the fact that the Radiant Church had a hard time entering the territory was all due to him. His contributions to the family were quite large, and his network of contacts outside was also extremely wide.

The fifth child Juwan was an attractive strawbag, devoid of wisdom. He only takes into consideration his own personal being. Seeks small benefits while forgetting righteousness. But his mouth was quite flowery, gaining his father's favor. Also, he always wanted to be the Patriarch. Along with his gang of sleazy villains, they were quite the formidable power inside the Family.

Smith knew that although Peter was struggling to take the position of Patriarch, he would never think of harming the family. He was already managing the family for all these years, he certainly valued it dearly. The only candidate that would force Zhao Hai could only be Juwan.

Smith was quite annoyed at Juwan. He was a typical black sheep. If he wanted to play around, then that's fine, but he always wanted to scramble for power as well as getting in between things. He didn't contribute anything useful to the family, only harm.

Smith also knew that this wasn't just about the successorship. It was certain that some people in the family were quite envious. A supply of 50 thousand fire fishes could net them at least 200 thousand gold coins after further processing. And this was pure

profit, all other expenses were already deducted.

A minimum of 200 thousand per month was about 2 million gold coins in a year. Even if someone chooses to ignore this profit, they wouldn't be able to hold themselves for too long. The elders of the family should've been stunned by such figures, and it was certainly Juwan's doing that the family was currently heading the wrong direction.

Not only did Smith decline the family's command, he also wrote a strongly worded letter back. He stated that Zhao Hai was better off left alone, otherwise the family would certainly suffer and lose big.

However, he didn't feel assured. He knew that the elders back at the headquarters were very stubborn and arrogant. Although they were pressured by the Radiant Church all these years, their old bones didn't give in. To the elders, everyone should clear the way when the Calci Family name gets mentioned.

In reality, Smith also held the pride of an old noble family inside himself, but he wasn't excessive like the family elders. He knew that reputation wasn't enough, the family needed strength. Only strength could decide a Clan's future.

Pressuring other people with the status of a Clan wasn't the right way. The family should be collecting talents, they should find and recruit strong and talented individuals and make them belong to the family. Also, there were people who might fight back when faced with pressure, Zhao Hai was one of those examples.

Chapter 383 – Learning to Brew from the Apes

Zhao Hai actually knew of these matters. Although he had been staying inside Sweet Plum Courtyard for these past few days while never going out, he still knew what happens inside the City Lord's office. Of course he would know, he has the monitor.

Although he had been quite low-key, he was very informed about the happenings in the continent. He knew that Smith couldn't be uninformed about the matters of the continent, and when Smith were to know about them, he would discuss it with other people. As long as he talked about it inside the City Lord's Mansion, Zhao Hai would find about it at the earliest possible time.

Zhao Hai was extremely satisfied with Smith's actions but not with the Calci Family. He didn't think that the family would want to get his methods, this made Zhao Hai quite angry.

But hearing from Smith and Phil's conversations, he knew that even though the decision was from the family, not everyone was responsible for this. This made Zhao Hai quite relieved.

He was also clear about internal disputes inside these great clans, so the Calci Family certainly wouldn't be an exception. It was impossible for such a family to not have their own internal power struggle.

This made Zhao Hai quite annoyed, he didn't want to get involved in these things, but these matters actually came to find him.

Currently, Laura and Megan had been very close these past few days. Lately they had been going around Sky Water City to play. On the contrary, since Zhao Hai knew that there were a lot of people who were looking for him, he just stayed inside the City Lord's Mansion.

Laura and the others were walking around the city not just to play, but also to look at the city's situation as well as look for a suitable place to establish their shop.

Zhao Hai wanted to look for a good place for a shop inside Sky Water City. Although Smith told him that this matter would be taken care of, Zhao Hai didn't place his hopes on it. After all, he couldn't just depend on Smith for everything. He was their partner, if they cannot be in the same position, their partnership wouldn't be solid.

The premise of a cooperation was the equality of both sides. If the two parties' standing in the partnership wasn't equal, one of them could only be considered as being hired. Now that Zhao Hai was staying inside the City Lord's Mansion, he felt that he was hiring himself to the Calci Family, this made Zhao Hai uncomfortable deep inside.

One could say that Zhao Hai was a proud person. The more proud a person was about themselves, the less likely they would want to depend on other people.

It was even more so when Zhao Hai learned the ins and outs of the situation. He wanted to find a house outside to stay in even more. He didn't want the Calci Family to think that he owed them a favor since he was made to stay in the mansion.

While he was thinking about this, Smith's door being opened was seen on the monitor. When Smith saw Phil came in he immediately said, "Uncle Phil, what's the matter?"

Phil looked at Smith and forced a smile, "5th young master is coming in two days. I think that he didn't come with good intentions. It would be best to tell Mister Zhao Hai about the situation."

Hearing Phil's report, Smith couldn't help but frown. He didn't think that Juwan would personally come and meet Zhao Hai. Although Smith didn't fear Juwan, it wasn't good if Juwan offends

Zhao Hai.

Thinking of this, Smith immediately stood up and said, “Come, let’s go see Little Hai.” Then he lead Phil to walk towards Sweet Plum Courtyard.

Seeing the situation, Zhao Hai immediately turned the monitor off. He began to brew a pot of tea and got a book, pretending to have been reading all this time.

Although he was pretending, the book that he read was about Battle Qi. Now that the farm has reached level 25, it only needed 5 levels to reach level 30. When that time arrives, he could both learn Magic or Battle Qi. Zhao Hai was more inclined to learn Battle Qi since the space already had its own magic system. He could already use magic, but he was clueless about Battle Qi, thus, he began educating himself.

As long as he learns Battle Qi, he could effectively become a Magic and Martial Dual cultivation practitioner. This was quite important to him, so he wanted to closely understand Battle Qi.

Just after he had read a single page, Smith arrived. Smith wasn’t polite and directly came in, he didn’t want anyone to know that he came here. Upon entering and seeing Zhao Hai reading inside, Smith couldn’t help but laugh and said, “I must say, Little Hai, you’re quite free and unfettered. Hiding here and drinking tea, you look quite comfortable.”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and replied, “It’s quite nice, what’s the matter? Why did Big Brother Smith come here today?”

Smith nodded then smiled stiffly, “Then I’ll leave you to it. But there’s something bad, Little Hai. I have something to tell you, please don’t get offended.”

Zhao Hai nodded, then Smith continued, “Some elders of the family had been incited by my younger brother to make you hand over the method of raising fire fishes. I refused their decision, but

my fifth brother unexpectedly came personally. My brother is quite a conceited person, and sometimes I'm unable to control him. I don't want him to force you, Little Hai. So can you go out and hide for quite some time? Big Brother would certainly find ways to save you."

Zhao Hai was surprised, he didn't think Smith would actually say this. He turned to Smith and said, "Brother Smith, what do you mean? Will we not cooperate anymore? If we do, your younger brother can still disrupt our operations later. I can't always be in hiding, am I?"

Smith smiled bitterly as he shook his head, "Of course not, I'll solve this matter as soon as possible. But you need to give me some time. What do you think? You Big Brother is begging you."

Zhao Hai looked at Smith as he calmly nodded, "Very well, I'll leave Sky Water City tomorrow. But I hope that Brother Smith could fix this matter as soon as possible. I will leave my Phantasmal Beast Hawk to you so that you can use it to deliver me a letter when the matter is taken care of. Don't worry, as long as you give the letter to the hawk, it will certainly find me."

Smith nodded, then forced a smile at Zhao Hai, "Little Hai, this time Big Brother has been unfair to you. I hope that you don't get offended by this."

Zhao Hai returned the smile and said, "It don't mind. Everyone has something they can't solve easily, rest assured."

Smith nodded then said, "That's good, in a while I will have people prepare the money so that you can bring it with you when you leave. I'll also have the Shelley Family notified along the way."

Zhao Hai smiled, "Good, also, you can tell them that if they have any unique plants and animals, I could take those instead of money, I'll pay a high price."

Smith already knew of this custom of Zhao Hai. So he wasn't

surprised and just nodded, “Very well, feel relieved, I’ll take care of it. Little Hai, you should tidy up, I won’t be disturbing you. Have a drink with me in the evening since I won’t be able to send you off tomorrow.”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, “You don’t have to be polite, Brother Smith. Right, I want to buy slaves, it would be best if they have craftsmanship skills. I don’t care about how expensive they are. If they cannot be prepared today, then giving them to me when I return is also good. No matter what kind of craftsmanship skill they have, I’ll have them as long as they have the skill.”

Smith nodded, “Alright, don’t worry. They’ll be waiting for you when you return. How many do you want?”

Zhao Hai replied, “The more the better, except for craftsmanship, it would be better if you could also find me some slaves that are literate. I don’t want Battle slaves who don’t know how to read. I want those who know how to craft and those who know how to read.”

Although he didn’t know why Zhao Hai was so specific about the slaves, Smith didn’t ask any further and just nodded, “Okay, the next time you come, I’ll promise you that you’ll be able to get these slaves.”

Zhao Hai nodded, “That’s good. Then Big Brother, you still need to be busy. You don’t have to worry about me anymore.” Then Smith stood up and went away.

Looking at Smith’s departing back, Zhao Hai smiled bitterly to himself, “I just arrived for two days, now I need to leave. Well, I happen to need to learn beer brewing from Little Jin. Hai, I didn’t think that I would actually need to learn beer-making from a monkey. If I tell this to someone, they would certainly laugh at me.”

After ridiculing himself, Zhao Hai returned his attention to the Battle Qi Fundamentals book. The book’s contents were very

simple, it teaches you to exercise and steadily improve your body's strength. Time will come when you feel a tingling sensation, and this sensation would be Battle Qi. It is a mysterious force present in the human body.

This theory wasn't new to Zhao Hai. There were various descriptions of Qi present in Chinese Martial arts. Zhao Hai used to be a nerd, so he read a ton of novels, it wasn't strange for him to have some sort of dream of being a martial artist. He tried to learn some martial arts from the television, but since he didn't have the proper guidance of a master, he didn't have any positive results, so he finally gave up.

Although this book has some aspects that were quite different to what he knew, there were common ways in them that would help a person get stronger.

In Chinese Martial Arts, the main points were giving priority to the body's health, paying more attention to breathing and exhalation. Battle Qi was more like external martial arts in Chinese terms. They give main emphasis on the body's strength, circulating external qi rather than internal. Not only did it emphasize having a strong body, it also highlights having strong fighting strength.

But this kind of practice method could easily cause internal injuries. When it came to Warriors, internal injuries were very difficult to cure. If you were unable to completely heal your internal injuries, they might affect you when you reach old age. This was what most warriors fear.

This made Zhao Hai's feelings quite convoluted, he didn't know whether he should practice Battle Qi or the Martial Arts that he had tried to learn before.

Without knowing, afternoon came, Laura and the others also came back with Megan. When they arrived at Sweet Plum Courtyard, Megan chatted with Laura and the others for while

before leaving. After seeing Megan leave, Laura and the others immediately went to Zhao Hai's room.

Seeing that the group had come back, Zhao Hai gave a nod and smiled, "How was it? Did you have fun?"

Laura sat down and poured herself a cup of tea, "Quite fun, but there weren't any more things that we find amusing. How about Brother Hai? Aren't you getting bored with staying with the same people at home all the time?"

Zhao Hai shook his head and said, "There's no other people present here right now. You need to tidy up, we'll head back to Ape Island."

Laura stared at Zhao Hai and asked, "Brother Hai, is there a problem?"

Zhao Hai nodded, then he told Laura and the others about the Calci Family's matter. Laura listened then calmly said, "Right then, let's leave for a while. This way, we won't be worrying about the Calci Family's internal matters. At least brother Smith still cares for us."

Zhao Hai agreed, "Of course he would take care of us. Otherwise he wouldn't have us leave. If we stay, we'll get embroiled with Juwan's schemes. We could have stood right by brother Smith's side, but he didn't let us do so; this expresses his sincerity towards us. I think it is also good that we head towards Ape Island, it would be best if we learn how to brew those beer made by Little Jin's tribe. This may allow us to add this as one of our products, increasing our income."

The little monkey was currently being hugged by Meg. When he heard Zhao Hai mention him, he gave a few happy shrieks as he expressed a proud appearance.

Laura smiled towards Little Jin, "What are you so proud for? That thing that you brew is very sour, it would be strange if people

actually like it. I actually like the bread tree fruit. Brother Hai, you said that you aren't planting any bamboo rice this time, how about planting some Bread Trees?"

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "I actually had the same idea, it seems like the Bread Tree has more output compared to Bamboo rice. But there are also advantages in planting Bamboo rice. We have no other choice but continue planting them. How about this, I'll have Cai'er leave a piece of land for the Bread tree. What do you think?"

Meg nodded this time, "It's good. The fruit of the tree can be eaten directly, it also tastes good. Furthermore, a fruit is enough for a beastman to eat. If we save the fruits we harvest, we could sell them to Brother Wales come spring. It will certainly be a huge hit, right Little Jin?"

Little Jin shrieked excitedly, he moved his limbs around while in Meg's arms which made the women smile tenderly. With Little Jin present, they seem to be laughing a lot more.

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "Meg's idea is very good. Moreover, the Bread fruit could be retained for a long time. Also, we seem to underestimate Little Jin's liquor. Although it seemed to be sour, it was because Little Jin had fermented it for too long, otherwise the flavor should be very good. Haven't you experienced the liquor's sweet smell? Believe me, that liquor will certainly be the continent's best seller in the future."

The reason behind Zhao Hai's confidence stems from the sales volume of beer back on Earth. No matter male or female, almost everybody would drink a few glasses of beer. Of all the liquor sold, beer was considered to be the one with the most volume consumed. If Zhao Hai manages to generate beer, it will surely sell very well in the continent.

Also, the reason why Zhao Hai wanted to continue planting Bamboo rice was because he wanted to make rice wine. When he manages to make rice wine, it would certainly be popular as well.

With these products, they could earn a lot of money.

Because Laura and the others didn't like the taste of beer, they didn't drink much when they were still at Ape Island. They just took a little sip and didn't consume much. So when Zhao Hai expressed his thoughts, they didn't believe it. Laura frowned and said, "Really? Is brother Hai really confident about this?"

Zhao Hai nodded, while Little Jin shrieked proudly at the side. This brought another round of laughter from the group.

Chapter 384 – I'm Afraid That You Can't Handle It

Zhao Hai sat in the Haven while it left Sky Water City. Right now, they were already offshore. Although this part of the sea was still under Rosen Empire's region, there weren't a lot of Rosen Empire warships that could be seen.

Rosen Empire's sea defense wasn't very strong. Their warships were generally used to keep their maritime territory in order. Those who the empire sends outwards to pillage and plunder were generally their privateers.

It may sound absurd, for the empire to send some pillagers out at sea. But this was the truth, those privateers wouldn't act inside Rosen Empire waters, moreover, they won't fly the banner of the empire.

Actually, this matter of nations sending forth privateers was a public secret. Almost all nations in the continent had their own privateers who move on different parts of the sea, flaunting different banners from their host nation. But they were still under some sort of control by the state.

However, these privateers generally wouldn't live great lives. If they do a bad job, their host country would deal with them. If they do a good job, the plundered nation would be the ones hunting them down. Since there was still need to control these privateers, an official member of the nation would act at its true core, the other members were generally mercenaries.

Take the Rosen Empire's privateer fleet for example, their fleet commander is a member of the Rosen Imperial Family, but all other people were mostly mercenaries. When they turn into privateers, their identity would be criminals, pirates. But if they do arrive in Rosen Empire, they would be granted asylum by the Rosen Empire navy.

Zhao Hai and the others were now out at sea, although they still weren't out of the Rosen Empire's waters, the control of the empire around these parts were quite lax.

These parts were the most attractive places for merchants. Although they could travel along the empire's coastline for safety, they would need to pay taxes. But if they travel along these waters, although they could meet some pirates, there was still the possibility of travelling safely. This way, they didn't need to pay taxes, since taxes for nautical cargo were very high.

Zhao Hai didn't care about any of these since, right now, he was carrying the Calci Family's badge. Having this badge meant that he was exempted from Rosen Empire's taxation, it was the family's privilege.

With this privilege, there was no way that Zhao Hai wouldn't make use of it. He didn't want his money to be used for paying Rosen Empire's tax.

At this time, Zhao Hai wasn't sitting on the deck of his ship while watching the sea. Several small islands pass by leisurely, the scene was quite tranquil and peaceful.

Zhao Hai liked the peacefulness of the sea. He thought that the sea is just like a person. Sometimes she would be in a good mood, sometimes in a bad mood. Although both aspects have their own charm, Zhao Hai believes that when the sea is tranquil, that was when it was the most beautiful. It looked and felt like a sleeping beauty.

At this moment, a fleet of ships could be seen approaching from the distance. Zhao Hai couldn't help but stare at the group of ships, since the ships weren't any ordinary vessels, they were flying the banner of the Rosen Empire. The fleet was led by three five-masted ironclad battleships followed by seven three-masted battleships. A total of 10 ships were heading towards Zhao Hai's location.

Zhao Hai stared, it wasn't normal for these ships to reach this

part of the sea. The only reason for their appearance here should be Zhao Hai's group.

Zhao Hai frowned, then he opened the monitor. The ships weren't that far from them, he should be able to see the opposite party at this distance.

He knew that the leader of such a show of power should be at one of those three ironclad battleships, so he focused his attention to the three ships and scoured for possible suspects.

Laura and the others were standing on Zhao Hai's side so they knew what was going on. They were also paying attention to the monitor and wanted to see who was there to block them. Their ship was sporting the Calci Family's badge, no ordinary ship would dare approach it.

Zhao Hai eyes suddenly shrank, this was because he saw a person, a young person about less than 30 years old wearing Noble clothing. He looked very charming while carrying his Magic staff.

Naturally, Zhao Hai didn't notice the young man because of how good looking he was. On the contrary, he disliked these kinds of men. To Zhao Hai, they looked just like a well polished egg.

The main reason that Zhao Hai was surprised was because the young man looked just like a younger version of Smith, but more charming.

Seeing the young man made Zhao Hai think that this man should be Smith's fifth brother, Juwan.

Zhao Hai couldn't help but frown, he didn't understand why Juwan would appear at this time. Moreover, they seem to be planning on blocking their ship. Didn't Smith say that this guy will arrive tomorrow at Sky Water City? And that he would arrive by Law River? Why would he be here?

While thinking of these things, the ten ships had already surrounded Zhao Hai's group. Juwan's ship went to Zhao Hai's

ship's side, then while using a springboard, the two ships were connected. At this time, Juwan came over.

Zhao Hai didn't stop him, he knew that there was no use to preventing him from coming. Juwan came so in any case, Zhao Hai had to come and meet him. He wanted to know what kind of person this Juwan is, what he wanted, as well as how he will threaten him.

Juwan arrived onboard the Haven and then swept a glance at Zhao Hai. His expression showed that he seemed to see a beggar on the street.

But when he saw Laura with Meg and Nier, his eyes lit up. This made Zhao Hai's expression sink, he immediately disliked this person. It didn't matter that he was Smith's brother nor that he was a member of Calci Family, Zhao Hai came to despise him.

Zhao Hai didn't say anything, he just looked at Juwan as Juwan also looked at him. Juwan was waiting for Zhao Hai to speak first, but Zhao Hai didn't do so. It was a competition of silence.

Zhao Hai looked at Juwan's face, then he suddenly smiled. He waved his hand and had his undead prepare chairs and tables as well as tea.

When Zhao Hai waved his hand, Laura and the others understood what he wanted to do. So they immediately sat on the chairs and poured themselves a cup of tea, ignoring the presence of Juwan.

Juwan was at first dumbfounded about what happened, then a boundless anger came. He didn't think that Zhao Hai would choose to ignore him this way, he completely disregarded his face.

When he saw Zhao Hai take an apple to tease the little monkey in his arms, Juwan couldn't help it anymore as he roared towards Zhao Hai, "Zhao Hai, you dare ignore me?! Do you know who I am? You dared act like this to me?"

Zhao Hai looks at Juwan and showed a faint smile, “Why don’t you ask yourself who you are, why are asking me? Why would it be ridiculous for me to treat you like this? This is my ship, my private property. It was you guys who actually dared to come aboard my ship without permission. Now what? You want me to invite you for dinner?”

Juwan pointed his finger at Zhao Hai, unable to utter a word. At this time, the person beside Juwan yelled and rushed towards Zhao Hai. Zhao Hai was already wary of these people. Juwan brought some Warrior dressed people with him, these people’s strengths weren’t great, they have the same standard as dogs.

The person who charged towards Zhao Hai obviously wanted to make Zhao Hai look ugly hoping for Juwan to reward him later. However, Zhao Hai didn’t mind him. The warrior had the strength of a 5th rank. On this ship, any undead could cut this man in half in a matter of seconds.

Zhao Hai didn’t bat an eyelid and just gave a look at Shun who was beside him. Shun immediately appeared at the warrior’s side, pointing his dagger at the warrior’s neck in a backhand grip. At this point, Zhao Hai calmly said, “That’s enough, Shun. I don’t want to see blood this day.”

Shun complied, although the dagger didn’t continue on its path, Shun didn’t withdraw it. He just watched the warrior with cold eyes. The man, on the other hand, didn’t dare more even a single finger. He saw from Shun’s eyes that if he were to even move a little, the other party wouldn’t hesitate to pierce his throat.

The other people who came on the ship were stunned, Juwan didn’t think that Zhao Hai would dare to act. The other warriors around Juwan immediately went to protect him.

Zhao Hai stood up, then he looked at Juwan and said, “You should be Juwan, yes? Don’t worry, I won’t kill you for Brother Smith’s sake. So, what do you want?”

Juwan looked at Zhao Hai then waved his hand. The warrior immediately returned to his side. Although the warrior was unsuccessful, Juwan made sure to remember him. No matter what, this man dared to make the first move.

Juwan looked at Zhao Hai and calmed his face down, at least on the surface. Then he said with a serious voice, “You really don’t know why I came?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, “To be honest, I do know why you came. But I want to know what you’ll do if I decline. Will you make these battleships attack me?”

Juwan coldly snorted, “Perhaps, but I urge you to think carefully. If you refuse, what do you think the family would think of you? I will also make the people from the Family refrain from sheltering you.”

Zhao Hai looked at Juwan and smiled faintly, “I’m fine with that. But you also have to think about the consequences if that would happen. Did you already do that?”

Juwan gazed at Zhao Hai coldly, “There’s no use in frightening me. This will be up to you alone. You won’t be able to cause a ruckus since nobody will listen to you.”

Zhao Hai remained smiling then said, “That’s not necessary. I’m not a soft persimmon that you could just pinch. I will resist, and I will be fierce. I’m afraid that you won’t be able to handle it.”

Chapter 385 – I'll Accept These Ships.

Juwan didn't believe Zhao Hai's words. In his opinion, Zhao Hai was a Dark Mage who offended the Radiant Church and was forced to leave his home, he didn't have any other way of surviving. Thus, Juwan didn't fear Zhao Hai's threats, instead he showed a cold smile and said, "No need to frighten me, there's no use in talking big words. You came to seek refuge with our family, but refuses to pay a price. Aren't you being shameful in taking my family's money?"

Zhao Hai stared, he didn't think that this was what Juwan thought of him. But he didn't mind it, he only looked at Juwan and said, "Not at all, and why would I be shameless? If I wasn't a Dark Mage when I came to do business in Sky Water City, wouldn't you still settle me? If I came to Sky Water City, wouldn't your family still protect me? When I came to Sky Water City, I didn't ask your family to guard my well-being. I didn't ask to stay at the City Lord's Mansion either, it was Smith who made me stay there. It was never in my intention to be there. And now you want to take this into account? You cannot be any more wrong."

Juwan was brought to silence by Zhao Hai. He was right, even if he wasn't a Dark Mage, the family would still protect him inside Sky Water City. This was one of the reasons why Sky Water City thrived, if they didn't do this, the city wouldn't have reached its present degree.

Juwan was speechless for quite some time, he didn't know how to reply. He looked at Zhao Hai's face and couldn't help but feel his anger rising up. Then he said loudly, "You're saying that you won't give me the thing that I want? If you don't hand it over, then I'm going to be impolite."

Zhao Hai looked interestingly at Juwan and said, "Impolite? You want to attack me? Do you have the strength?"

Juwan looked at Zhao Hai's eyes and couldn't help but feel coldness in his heart. He knew that he went too far in asking and even did it in Zhao Hai's ship. If Zhao Hai wanted to deal with him, it would be very easy. He heard that Zhao Hai's strength wasn't weak.

However, Juwan gave a look to the person standing behind him and calmed his heart down. This person was someone that was sent by the family to support him and was placed as his housekeeper. Even though this man always said 'we cannot do this', 'we cannot do that', his strength was actually quite formidable, a 7th rank Dark Mage.

When Juwan saw this man, he felt relief. He turned his head to Zhao Hai and said, "If you really have the ability to deal with me, then show me."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Witness this". Then he waved his hand, covering the skies above the ten ships with an uncountable number of undead. Soon, the ships were overwhelmed by Zhao Hai's summons. Nobody expected Zhao Hai to deal with the ships instead of Juwan. Before long, there were no living persons left on the vessels.

Then Zhao Hai waved his hand for a second time, making ten clumps of black mists head towards the ships. After the mists vanished, all the original crew from those ten ships were turned into undead.

Zhao Hai looked at the dumbfounded Juwan and said, "I'll accept these ten ships while preparing a boat for you, you don't have that much people left anyway. There should be ships that pass by this place so you should be able to reach Sky Water in a few days." Then he waved his hands as the ten ships were led away by Zhao Hai's newly acquired undead crews.

Juwan was frozen while all of these happened. He didn't think Zhao Hai would do this, this was completely out of his

expectations.

The person sent by the family just stood there and sighed in his heart. Zhao Hai's move was very beautiful, only embarrassing Juwan while taking into account the Calci Family's face. With Zhao Hai's strength they wouldn't be able to do anything.

The housekeeper looked at the ten ships that they initially brought and saw that all the crew had become advanced level undead. Turning thousands of people into advance level undead was not something that was easily done, not even himself could do this feat. Even if he did so, his lifespan would drastically decrease. This made him have a new understanding of Zhao Hai's strength. At the same time, he also noticed that Zhao Hai's ships were also filled with these advanced level undead. This meant that there were even more Advanced undead on Zhao Hai's pockets.

Seeing the ships being driven away, Juwan was frightened. He got angry as his pale expression turned to Zhao Hai. Then he shouted wildly, "Kill him! Kill him for me!"

Just as he said this, a pair of powerful hands held him. Juwan turned to look and saw the housekeeper that the family sent. The housekeeper calmly looked at him and said, "Young master, this is no joking matter. Let's leave."

Then the housekeeper turned to Zhao Hai and said, "Mister Zhao Hai, I'll have to ask you to prepare a boat for us. Also, please prepare enough water and food."

Zhao Hai looked at the housekeeper and faintly smiled, "No problem. I will also send a letter to Brother Smith so that he would send people to fetch you as soon as possible. Mister, I must also add that no matter how the Calci Family deals with this later on, my stance remains the same. I just want you to tell the family to think carefully next time. Tell them to not deceive their minds with the benefits in front of their eyes." Then he waved his hand towards his undead to prepare the things for Juwan.

Zhao Hai gave a whistle as a Blood Hawk fell from the Space. He wrote a few words as he sent a letter to Smith via the Hawk.

He didn't ignore Juwan, Zhao Hai turned his head and said, "Well, Juwan, you can go now. The boat has food and water enough for seven days, I've placed some wine as well. Although this boat isn't big, it is enough for your group to sit comfortably inside. This is not a sailing ship, so you don't have to do anything. As long as nothing happens, Brother Smith's men should arrive in three days. You wouldn't be in any grave danger."

Juwan wanted to retort, but was instead pulled by his housekeeper. The housekeeper knew that there was no use in talking to Zhao Hai at this point. It would be better if they left early, they truly underestimated Zhao Hai's strength.

At the same time, the housekeeper thought about making the family change its approach regarding Zhao Hai. The other party was a man they cannot mess with, his strength is too great.

The manager remembered that all of the undead sent by Zhao Hai to attack the ten ships were all Advanced level undead. There were tens of thousands of them, almost equal to the strength of three legions. One person controlling three legions of those undead who weren't afraid of death. How can anyone mess with this person?

This man wasn't just a housekeeper, he was also someone sent by the family to act as surveillance. The Calci Family sent these housekeepers to each of the successors in order to monitor and evaluate their performance. They were sent to appraise the person as to whether or not they were fit to hold the position of Patriarch, they were very essential for the process of selection.

Naturally, this matter wasn't made known to the candidates. They only thought that the Family was taking good care of them, that's why they sent those housekeepers to help their day to day lives.

Zhao Hai didn't mind them anymore. He wanted the Calci Family to learn something from this encounter. He wanted to make them know that he wasn't afraid while at the same time wanting to find out how the family would continue on with this matter. If they handled it well, then all is good. If they didn't then Zhao Hai would look at other directions since the Calci Family wasn't worthy of his cooperation.

Looking at Juwan's boat that was slowly turning into a black spot, Laura expressed her worries, "Brother Hai, is this good enough? Are we giving Brother Smith enough face?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Don't worry, I had a Blood Hawk carry the ghost staff. Also I had a few of them patrol the surrounding skies for a few days. As long as a situation happens, we would be there to save them. After all, he is still Smith's younger brother. We can't have him face any trouble, we only want to teach him a lesson. Otherwise, we won't be seen highly by the Calci Family, they will only treat us as servants. I don't want that."

Laura nodded as she sighed, "I didn't think that someone like that existed inside Calci Family, it was surprising. I hope Brother Smith could find a solution as soon as possible."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "It doesn't matter if he takes a long time. We could just stay at Little Jin's island and continue to learn how to make his liquor." At this time, the little monkey expressed his delight, making Zhao Hai and the others laugh.

...

At this time, on the boat, Juwan was angry while looking at his housekeeper, "Zach, what are you doing?! Why do we have to listen to his words? Why don't we deal with him? Didn't the clan say that you are strong? Why do I see that you're good for nothing right now?"

Zach looked at Juwan and calmly responded, "Young Master, it

will be impossible for us to beat Zhao Hai. Didn't you see? He just released tens of thousands of advanced level undead, tens of thousands! If we fight him, then we're just courting death. Even if he cannot kill us, it would be simple to capture us. This was why I didn't resist."

Although Juwan was very angry, he was not a fool. After recollecting the situation of Zhao Hai blotting the skies with undead, he couldn't help but feel startled. He knew that what Zach said was right, but he couldn't just swallow this humiliation. From his childhood years to the present, it was only Zhao Hai who treated him like this.

Juwan gritted his teeth as he sat down. At the same time, he gave an oath in his heart that he would certainly tell this matter to his father. He must return Zhao Hai's actions and wash away this shame.

Chapter 386 – It's Not Impossible, It is a Certainty

Smith was currently in his own study, writing a letter to his elder brother. He wanted to explain Zhao Hai's situation in detail, he wanted the family to change its ways in approaching Zhao Hai.

Smith knew that the most important thing for the family was Zhao Hai, those fire fishes only came second. Money cannot compare to what Zhao Hai could bring. Smith wouldn't even hesitate to exchange the entire Sky Water City for Zhao Hai's loyalty, but this was naturally impossible.

Smith also knew that Zhao Hai wasn't the type of person that could be lured in with money. Although it seems like Zhao Hai loved money, every single coin he got was rightfully gained. Even when he robbed Grand Duke Lionheart of all his belongings, Zhao Hai did it with his own ability.

Smith also knows that Zhao Hai took sentiment heavily into account, this was why Smith has been taking care of Ruyen all this time. Although Ruyen's family hadn't sent someone to pick her up yet, she was very safe inside Sky Water City. She can go around and play without worrying about her own safety.

Although Zhao Hai rarely visited Ruyen, Smith took care of her very well. He wanted Zhao Hai to know that he had been helping him secretly. This was so that Zhao Hai could develop even a small trace of gratitude towards Calci Family, which may be taken into account if ever the family would need his skills in the future.

But Smith's painstaking efforts were destroyed in this one move by the family. Smith understood that if this matter wasn't handled properly, Zhao Hai wouldn't work with the family anymore. This loss is too great.

Smith didn't believe that Zhao Hai was afraid of the Radiant

Church. With his attitude towards the church, how could he be afraid of it? In addition, Zhao Hai was a crown prince back at the Beastman Prairie where the Radiant Church couldn't reach their hands. So even if the family didn't place any importance to Zhao Hai, he could still hide inside the Prairie. At that time, there would be no way for the Church to deal with him.

At this moment, Phil came in. Only Phil was able to enter Smith's study without notification. When Smith saw his Phil, he looked at the paper on the other's hand and asked, "Uncle Phil, what's the matter?"

Phil calmly gave Smith the paper. Seeing Phil's expression, Smith knew that something must have happened. He immediately received the paper and read its contents, then his face turned very ugly in an instant.

Bang!! Smith slapped the surface of his table, then stood up. He walked around the room as he mumbled, "This doesn't make sense, why would he do this? Why is he making things very difficult for me?"

Phil knew that Smith wasn't talking about Zhao Hai, but Juwan. Juwan almost pushed Zhao Hai to the opposing side. Fortunately, Zhao Hai was patient, and just taught Juwan a lesson. Otherwise, things would have been very bad for the Calci Family.

Smith wasn't angry about how Zhao Hai treated Juwan. On the contrary, he felt relieved. These past few years, Juwan had been extremely annoying. But because he needed to consider his father's face, Smith didn't say anything. Juwan was getting more and more excessive, it was about time that someone taught him a lesson.

At this point, Phil's serious voice can be heard, "I already arranged the people who will meet the fifth young master. Young Master, you must prepare and solve this matter as soon as possible. Or else, the fifth young master might create more troubles when he comes back."

Smith nodded, “It’s not a just a possibility, it is certain. With Little Hai giving him a lesson, I think that he will certainly incite the clan to deal with Zhao Hai when he gets back. This matter should be taken care of, otherwise the family would certainly suffer. I always have this feeling that Zhao Hai had a lot of secrets and what he showed us was just the tip of the iceberg. We cannot push him to become our enemy.”

Phil was in approval with Smith’s view. He had a quite a lot of interactions with Zhao Hai so he had made some sort of understanding about their visitor. Just like what Smith said, Phil also thought that there were too many secrets that Zhao Hai has not yet revealed. It was certainly unwise for the family to turn him into an enemy before they knew everything about Zhao Hai.

Phil nodded and said, “We still have a few days time. But I’m currently worried about the fifth young master’s safety. Now that the young master had been thrown out at sea by Zhao Hai, there may be some people who’ll develop thoughts of attacking him. Don’t forget, we have a lot of enemies.”

Smith shook his head and smiled, “No need to be worried, Little Hai already had that covered. It can be seen that he still didn’t want to have a falling out with us. I’m sure that he should have sent someone to guard Juwan’s safety.”

Phil nodded, then Smith sighed and said, “Uncle Phil, make sure to get him back safely. There’s no other acceptable outcome.”

...

At this time, Zhao Hai was sitting on the deck while observing Juwan’s situation. He couldn’t have Juwan suffer an accident, otherwise, he wouldn’t have anything to say to Smith. He also wouldn’t be able to cooperate with the Calci Family anymore.

Thus, he could only insure Juwan’s safety. He also wanted to see how the family reacts to this scenario. But he really didn’t worry too much. This area was still under Sky Water City’s domain, the

Calci Family's influence here should still be quite strong.

And just like what he expected, a Calci Family ship came to pick Juwan up after three days of sending the letter. Zhao Hai felt relieved, currently, they were now approaching Ape Island.

When Zhao Hai returned to Sky Water City, he didn't go and see Ruyen. He knew that she didn't want to meet him, and from Laura's inquiry, Ruyen was already living happily in the city. Zhao Hai didn't want to disturb her.

Naturally, he knew what Smith was secretly doing. Zhao Hai really put to heart what Smith just did, this proved that Smith truthfully regarded him very high deep in his heart.

...

This time, Zhao Hai obtained 10 additional ships. Adding on to the three he obtained earlier, the Swordfish, and the Haven, he now had a total of 15 ships.

Fifteen ships wasn't a small number, most clans wouldn't necessarily have this many ships. Although these ships' ability to store cargo wasn't as good as freighters, Zhao Hai still thought that these ships were still useful.

In five days time, they finally arrived at Ape Island. They could actually arrive at an earlier time, but Zhao Hai didn't want to be suspicious, so he just went with the normal voyage towards the island.

Zhao Hai's purpose in returning to the island was mostly for studying Little Jin's way of brewing beer. For this matter, he brought over a few beastmen. Since these beastmen had a bit of experience in making liquor, they should be able to learn quite easily.

Ape Island was still the same, when Zhao Hai and the others came down from the ship, Little Jin's tribemates were already waiting for them. Zhao Hai and the others weren't polite and

immediately rode on the backs of some gorillas as they headed back to the lair.

This was the first time that the beastmen came to the island, so they were frozen at the sight of the huge trees. They didn't imagine that there were such huge trees that existed in this world.

Then, Zhao Hai introduced them to the Bread fruit. He just planted the trees in the space, so there hasn't been any fruits that were produced yet.

...

After staying at Little Jin's place for a while, Zhao Hai took some Bread Fruit and Beer before going back to Iron Mountain Fort.

Even though they hadn't returned for quite some time, there were no major changes that occurred on the fort other than the fact that Blockhead and Rockhead recently retired for some time. They were striving hard, hoping to break through their bottleneck.

To be honest, Blockhead and Rockhead's aptitudes weren't that great. But they were willing to work hard, which was rarely seen in some people. Zhao Hai adored this quality,

When Zhao Hai's group arrived at the fort's living room, Green, Merine and Kun were present. When he saw the group appear, Green smiled and said, "Oh?! Got bored of playing and decided to come home?"

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "A bit. Sky Water City is very nice, I also went to find us some slaves. I figured that it was time to increase the number of people we have here. Right, Grandpa Green, I have some good things here." Then he took out a Bread fruit and a bottle of beer.

Green looked curiously at the bread fruit. Zhao Hai smiled faintly as he opened it. When the fruit was opened, the flesh inside immediately inflated. Green was startled when he tasted the fruit, although it looked strange, it was quite interesting, it is also very

good.

Then Zhao Hai made him taste the beer. Although Zhao Hai informed him that he would be taking away some liquor makers, Green wasn't informed about what liquor they would be making. Now that Zhao Hai brought some samples back, Green was curious and tasted it.

However, the taste was quite disappointing. And it's true, the state of the beer was very sour because of the current method of fermentation. It was not a very good thing to drink at the moment. Green didn't understand why Zhao Hai wanted to brew this stuff.

Green placed the glass down and turned to Zhao Hai as he said, "Young master, do we really need to make this time? To be honest, this is not tasty."

Zhao Hai smiled and replied, "It is certainly not tasty at present, this is because Little Jin didn't take good care of it. If we ferment it properly, the flavor will certainly very different, im sure. Also, I'm preparing to start growing some bread trees here. Although it is a tree, it has a higher yield than bamboo rice. What do you think?"

Green nodded and said, "This thing is truly good. It might even change the continent's staple food. It is a good thing to plant these. But young master, this tree grows on an island, its climate is very different compared to here. I don't think we need to plant them large scale, we should do so in small batches and see if they can survive in this environment. If it can't then we have no choice than to forget about it."

Zhao Hai thought for a moment before nodding. Because of the Space, he had forgotten about the effects of the climate. It seems like the situation here was the same as back on Earth. There were some southern fruits that couldn't be planted on northern soil because of the differing climate.

But Zhao Hai had already decided to plant some Bread Trees inside the Space. The yield of this tree is too high. If the Space

grew them, a Bread Tree's one season of harvest could beat three seasons of Bamboo Rice.

When this Bread tree produces fruit, he could sell it to the beastmen. Zhao Hai believed that the beastmen would certainly love it very much. The fruit was very convenient to carry and can be instantly eaten after being opened, moreover, it can be stored for a long time. For beastmen, this was the type of fruit that they wanted to obtain.

Merine happily laughed and said, "Young Master, it would certainly be good to plant this tree. It can be prepared very easily. If we plant a large number of it inside the Space, we can sell it to the continent as well. You mentioned that the bread fruit can be substituted with grain to sell to the beastmen. But you don't know how popular this food will be when also sold to humans. This fruit is just like grain, since it could be easily eaten and prepared."

Zhao Hai stared, then he scratched his head, "I actually forgot about this point. You're right, Grandma Merine. Come take a few of these fruits and try cooking with them."

Merine nodded, "Very well, I'll give it a try."

Green looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Young Master, it's currently winter. You can't do anything here right now, we can't go to the mountains and scour for stones either. How about you go find some islands and see whether you can take some stones there and bring it here? Otherwise, we will have to wait for spring before continuing with our plans, and I think that it would be too late at that point. What do you think?"

Zhao Hai thought about Green's words then said, "Good, I'll go find some small uninhabited islands and bring its stones right here. Also, this way, we wouldn't have to destroy the Back Wasteland in the future."

Green nodded then asked, "How is the situation at Sky Water City?"

Zhao Hai told Green and the others about the happenings back at Sky Water City. He didn't hide anything from them. This time, the matter with the Calci Family has two sides, one is good while the other is bad. The good one involves them being able to continue cooperating with the family. The bad thing involves them retreating, and making their position on the continent require more firmness. Zhao Hai hopes that Green would prepare for both scenarios.

After listening to Zhao Hai's recollection, Kun sighed and said, "No matter where, struggle for power exists. This time, Little Hai did a good job. We should let the Calci Family know that we are not pushovers, only then will they respect our standing."

Chapter 387 – Level Up

Telling Green and the others about those matters made Zhao Hai completely relieved. He believed that Green and the others would certainly make appropriate preparations. Actually, they really didn't need to rush those preparations right now, they could wait until the Calci Family makes its move. As long as the family took a side, no matter good or bad, Zhao Hai would need to act accordingly.

Zhao Hai and the others returned to Ape Island, this time with Green, Merine, and Kun. When they first saw the island, they thought that it would be fantastic if they could build a base on top of it.

However, Zhao Hai didn't want to destroy anything on the island. This place was Little Jin's domain. They lived for generations here, if Zhao Hai destroys this island, Little Jin's tribe might not be able to cope with it.

What they needed to do right now was learn how to brew beer from Little Jin first. Then they would return to Iron Mountain fort to make their experimentation. Maybe in the future, the group would be able to drink delicious beer.

Zhao Hai also had another thing to do, which was to find small islands that they could mine some stones from. This was so that they could prepare some houses for this coming spring.

Zhao Hai knew that Little Jin was quite clever, no matter what Zhao Hai says, the little monkey would understand. This would make things extremely easier for Zhao Hai.

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The liquor that Little Jin made actually had a simple process. They would place the ripe bread fruit to the tree hole, pour in some water, then make the natural yeast ferment the liquid until it had

this sort of fragrance.

Naturally, there were some points that they needed to pay attention in. First was the sealing, second was the degree of ripeness of the fruit, and third was placing the bread fruit along with its shell.

This didn't mean that only the shell was used in making the beer, on the contrary, it was the flesh of the fruit that was necessary. However, the shell also played an important role in the brewing process. It provides that beer flavor that Zhao Hai recognized. Without the shell, you would only get a barrel of dirty water with green furs.

Zhao Hai didn't know why this happened, so he could only try to use this method at this time. He is hoping that the beastmen liquor makers can improve the process and make a more delicious beer.

These beastmen winemakers have been living their life comfortably in the recent times. Their main task was to make milk wine, they didn't need to go do grazing but they still have enough food to eat, have money to spend, and milk wine to drink. Every aspect of their current life was beautiful.

In reality, beastmen loved tranquility, so they deeply desired a peaceful life. However, they needed to survive inside the Prairie, so they would migrate all the time and roam to different places. It was very fortunate that right now they need not migrate anymore. They can just stay in one place and live peacefully. Their children were getting educated, they didn't need to worry about food, and the best thing was having enough vegetables to eat.

Before, for a group like the Giant-Horned Bull Clan, it was impossible for them to eat vegetables several times per year since vegetables were very expensive. Currently, in Iron Mountain Fort, vegetables were cheap so they wanted to eat it as frequently as possible. In addition, they also had Blue eyed rabbit meat, so they didn't lack on that department either. For them, their present life

is extremely beautiful.

Because of this, the beastmen felt extremely grateful to Zhao Hai. Beastmen were simple minded beings, if you're good to them, then they will feel gratitude, they will do anything to pay you back. Otherwise, you are their enemies, it was a very simple philosophy.

So when Zhao Hai asked them to study the ape's way of making liquor, they didn't complain. On the contrary, they were very careful in learning, afraid of missing a crucial point in the process.

However, their worries were unnecessary. This was because the brewing of beer was very simple. Not only can they learn it quickly, even ordinary humans wouldn't find it hard to learn.

Regarding this situation, Zhao Hai was already expecting it. In all honesty, he didn't think that the process would be this simple.

After learning the process of making beer, Zhao Hai delivered the beastmen as well as Green's group back to Iron Mountain Fort. He wanted them to learn how to make beer, so that in the future they would have proper insights into making other kinds of liquor, like one made from rice.

Naturally, Zhao Hai made Green manage these matters. Currently, Zhao Hai was on his ship which was leaving Ape Island. He wanted to look for small island that contained some stone that they could use.

Actually, these few days, Zhao Hai was also waiting for Smith's letter to arrive. He wanted to find out whether the matter was finally solved. To his disappointment, the letter still hasn't arrived.

But Zhao Hai wasn't worried, he knew that after Juwan returns the the family, he would certainly find ways to deal with Zhao Hai. There are not many things that Smith could do about this.

After leaving Ape Island, Zhao Hai and the others were slowly approaching the deep sea. There are numerous islands at the sea,

some of them had freshwater in them, becoming supply points for some people. It was on these islands that pirates and great powers built their bases in. The other islands were basically ignored.

But these ignored islands were very useful for Zhao Hai. If the island had any fauna, Zhao Hai could use it to hopefully upgrade the Space. If they cannot, then it was still fine.

It was the same case if there are Magic Beasts present. If the island didn't have any of those two, Zhao Hai could still mine the island for stone. In any case, Zhao Hai currently looked like a son of a poor household, making use of anything and everything.

Moreover, another reason that Zhao Hai sailed this time was to go and absorb massive amounts of seawater into the Space.

Zhao Hai always wanted to do this, but since they were conscious of the time back then, he wasn't able to do so.

...

Three days after leaving Ape Island, when Zhao Hai and the others couldn't find a suitable small island. Zhao Hai thought that this was the correct time to move.

He immediately had Jinan stop the ship and drop the anchor. Then Zhao Hai opened a spatial rift to absorb massive amounts of seawater into the Space.

Seeing the sea water entering the Space, Zhao Hai became nervous. He finally understood why he was too hasty in absorbing water from the sea in the past. This was not because of the fact that they were hurrying at that time, but because he was too afraid that the seawater couldn't make his Space upgrade and disappointing him.

Because of the amount of seawater entering the Space, a whirlpool was created on the surface of the sea. Zhao Hai was afraid that the seawater was not enough to upgrade the Space, so he didn't stop. After half an hour or so, Zhao Hai stopped the

spatial rift, making the water's surface normal again.

Looking at the whirlpool vanish, Zhao Hai and the others entered the Space. After they arrived, a prompt was given, "Space has absorbed enough seawater containing various microorganisms to upgrade the Farm to Level 30 and the Ranch to level 20. Congratulations to the host for the effort."

"Since the Ranch has reached level 20, Small World Function has been unlocked. The Ranch will have the properties of a small world, limits on animals raised removed, limits on animal type removed, added seawater, increasing the amount of freshwater, added hot spring mountain, unlocked the background."

"Since Farm has reached level 30, Processing Factory Function unlocked, background unlocked: can now use background as arable land, no limit in plant quantity planted."

"With this level up, prediction for what happens next: when host's Farm reaches level 40 and the Ranch reaches level 30, both functions will combine, becoming a true Small World. When host's Farm reaches level 50 and the Ranch reaches level 40, host can buy more backgrounds, can plant and rear additional plants and animals on those backgrounds. Other progression path still locked, host has insufficient level. Hoping the host to increase his efforts."

Zhao Hai was frozen in place, after listening to the prompt up until the end, Zhao Hai yelled in celebration; Laura and the others did the same. The Space had finally reached level 30, Zhao Hai can finally create an antidote to cure his toxin.

Moreover, Zhao Hai didn't think that things would go this smoothly. The most important things were the new functions that the Farm and the Ranch has unlocked. The Ranch can now raise animals as much as it can fit, there's no more limit.

The Farm can now use the background. It's land area has certainly been increased. They can now plant a lot more crops this time, this function was extremely fantastic.

Moreover, the upgrades had allowed the Space to predict what happens when the it gets upgraded further. It would actually turn into a Small World, as well as simultaneously being able to buy more backgrounds. This revelation was too wonderful.

At this time, a prompt from the Space could be heard again, “Detected amount of toxic material on Host’s body. Space decided to reward the host, providing seeds for the antidote. Host may process medicine in the Processing Factory to create Detoxification Potion to remove toxicity. Seed placed in the inventory.”

Zhao Hai couldn’t help but laugh upon hearing the prompt. Now he really didn’t need to worry about dealing with the toxins on his body, the Space had conveniently solved it for him.

He immediately opened the inventory and found the seeds that were rewarded by the Space. Zhao Hai knew why the Space rewarded them specifically, these seeds were more than level 40. These were currently out of Zhao Hai’s reach.

Zhao Hai took a deep breath and turned to Cai’er, “Cai’er, after the crops mature, replace them with these seeds. Also, plant Bread trees massively on the background, transform the terrain into about 1,000 mu of planting space.”

Cai’er complied, then went onwards to control the Space and got busy.

Chapter 388 – Multipurpose Processing Machine

At this time, Laura and the others arrived right by Zhao Hai's side. Looking at their expressions, Zhao Hai couldn't help but laugh, "The Space has finally levelled up, our biggest worry has been solved. Hahaha. Now we don't need to upgrade the Space anymore, we've already got what we wanted."

Laura smiled as well and said, "No, we must still continue on upgrading the Space. If we do so, it will become a true separate world."

Zhao Hai laughed along with the others, Laura just said what he felt in his heart. Although Zhao Hai said that they didn't need to upgrade the Space anymore, he still actually wanted to find out what will happen when it reaches a high level. Now, he only knew what would happen when the Space reaches level 50, but what about 60? What about 70? Is there a limit to how many upgrades it could take? What will the Space become then?"

At this time, Zhao Hai suddenly remembered something. He immediately opened the Space's interface and saw a small processing factory icon.

Zhao Hai immediately selected the Processing Factory icon, a prompt was then heard that said, "Construction of Processing Factory selected, costs 100 thousand gold coins. Includes one free Multipurpose Processing Machine."

Zhao Hai immediately pressed confirm as he set an area not far away from the villa. Suddenly a white light shone before revealing a small workshop type place. The structure looked like a small house with very ordinary brick construction.

Zhao Hai and the others immediately went inside the workshop. Upon entering, what Zhao Hai saw was something that he didn't

expect.

Inside the more or less 200 sq. meter workshop, a single machine was present. But this didn't mean that the shop was very spacious, this was because the machine took up almost all of the space inside.

The machine looked very simple, you could only see three buttons labelled; 'Material', 'Process', and 'Begin', nothing else. You cannot see any input nor output on the machine, it looks exactly like an iron block with pipes here and there.

Zhao Hai looked at the machine and pressed the button labelled as 'Process'. Instantly, a page popped in front of him. The page was divided into several tabs which were categorized as: 'Potions', 'Food', 'Items', and 'Specials'.

Zhao Hai went to the 'Potions' tab to take a look. What appeared was a dense and numerous pile of potion names. He selected one randomly as information was relayed, "Strong Injury Healing potion, apply on flesh wound, can stop bleeding in the shortest possible time. Material needed, 37 wild aconite," it continued to list more medicinal names as well as the amount needed.

Seeing this, Zhao Hai understood the general way to use the machine. He went to the 'Food' tab and looked at the list. In the list were the same numerous amount of foods, from staple and non-staple dishes to condiments like jam, salad dressing and so on. It can also process liquor as well as providing the detailed formula.

He also looked at the 'Items' tab, and as expected, there were all kinds of tools present, as well as all kinds of weapons. This exhibition lit up a sense of anticipation inside Zhao Hai. Finally, he went to the 'Special' tab and saw varied selections. You could even process a Martial Arts manual inside, as well as Spatial Items and other mysterious things.

Of course, you also need to provide the materials if you want to acquire those special items. For example, if you want a Martial Arts

Manual, you need to provide another manual as well as things like pen and ink.

Zhao Hai switched off the interface and sighed, “This Multi Purpose Processing Machine is definitely worth its price. This thing is really easy to use, hehe, this is an extremely good thing.” At this time, information was presented inside his mind. The information was regarding the Processing Factory as well as the Multi Purpose Processing Machine.

Currently, the Processing Factory can be upgraded to Level 10. Levelling up will increase the number of machines that could be present. Since Zhao Hai could level up the Processing Factory to level 10, it meant that he could have 10 Multipurpose Processing Machines.

And the machines can make almost anything. As long as you have the proper materials, you can process anything you want.

The Multi-Purpose Processing Machine’s production is very formidable, if it was made to process continuously with enough materials, it would be able to make 100 thousand jin of flour per day. Processing rice would yield 500 thousand jin per day. For liquor, at least 10 thousand jin of fruit wine or white wine. Beer would be produced at a rate of 50 thousand jin per day.

If it was made to produce weapons, ordinary blades and swords produced per day would be 1000. If made to produce Spatial Equipment, it may only take a few days. However, the machine can only make one product at a time. If it was processing rice, it couldn’t make flour and etc.

Without thinking, Zhao Hai immediately upgraded the Processing Factory to Level 10. White light flashed and 9 additional workshops appeared in the Space.

At this time, Zhao Hao remembered that he must have spent quite a bit of money, so he immediately checked his gold coin balance. To his surprise, he was actually deducted 10 million coins!

He froze, he didn't know where this much money went.

Upon asking Cai'er, Zhao Hai knew that the Space charged him 10 million gold coins not just because of the Processing Factory, but also because of the upgrading of the Farm. It was necessary to know that expanding the Farm costs a lot of money.

Although he initially grieved, Zhao Hai knew that upgrading the Space was an overall good thing. At this time, Cai'er also notified Zhao Hai that there weren't enough places inside the Farm that could accommodate an additional 1000 mu or land. Only by using the background would the area requirements be satisfied. However, planting in the background didn't have the Space's benefit of speeding up the rate of growth. All plants grown in the background would have the same growth time as those grown outside.

But fortunately, there was a slight advantage which was that all the fauna planted in the background wouldn't need to consider the climate. This was a good thing for Zhao Hai.

So this time, in addition to having Cai'er plant some bread trees, he also had her plant a large number of fruit trees, rice bamboo, oil fruit trees, and a large variety of vegetables.

After arranging the matters inside the Space, Zhao Hai and the others went outside. Currently it was dusk, and the surface of the sea has turned golden.

Zhao Hai stood on the deck and gazed at the golden ocean, then he suddenly laughed, "Starting today, I won't have to worry about the 'Water of Nothingness'. Between the Heaven and the Earth, I will now be unstoppable!!!"

Laura and the others looked at Zhao Hai and smiled faintly. They didn't say anything, they understood Zhao Hai's current mood. In fact, they were actually as excited as Zhao Hai.

After quite some time, Zhao Hai calmed down and turned to

Laura and the others as he smiled, “The seas truly hold innumerable treasures. If we need to upgrade the Space in the future, we should just absorb some seawater. If we continue on upgrading the Space, a day would come where we wouldn’t need to worry about getting a source of products, our own world will support us.”

Laura smiled and said, “Brother Hai, what if we bring a lot of grain in the Prairie causing its price to drop. What would be your thoughts on that?”

Zhao Hai shook his head and said, “That’s not good, we can’t do that. Otherwise, bankruptcy will be prevalent among the small businessmen in the Continent. Those people would be the most affected if we do what you just said. For large businesses, not so much.”

Laura nodded, those small-scale merchants who trade in the continent only earn their money through arduous hard work. The ones who truly makes huge profits were those large merchant companies. What seems to be bad luck to small merchants would only be a small dent to these people.

Zhao Hai sighed, “What we needed to do now was not to decrease the price of grain. But instead, we should just provide enough food for the Beastmen so that not a lot of them would starve to death.”

At this moment, a fluctuation happened on the sea. Zhao Hai felt that the Haven just shook. The group was quite familiar with this scenario, this meant that an aquatic Magic Beast had come to attack them.

Zhao Hai immediately opened the monitor. Upon seeing the screen, he couldn’t help but stare. Currently, the monitor’s range was increased from two kilometers to ten, a fivefold upgrade.

However, compared to the changes inside the Space, this wasn’t that much. Zhao Hai didn’t mind it too much and just analyzed the current situation.

After seeing the situation under the ship, Zhao Hai stared blankly. This was because what he saw underneath was a person, but he immediately noticed that this wasn't an ordinary person. This was a type of human-shaped aquatic beast.

Zhao Hai observed the human-shaped magic beast, its height was about three meters and on its head were two antennae. On its torso were eight tall and slender feet, looking like those limbs that shrimps have. Additionally, it had claws as his two hands. However, it didn't have any feet, but instead, it had a tail like a shrimp.

Along with the shrimp-shaped person were a group of giant shrimps. Their bodies were about five meters long, a pair of big claws, and thick shells on their backs. Those Magic Beasts looked extremely strong.

Seeing this scene, Zhao Hai's couldn't help but knit his brows. This was because he suddenly remembered a name, Merperson!

Zhao Hai didn't understand why the other party decided to attack him as though he was a pirate. But he didn't have any time to think about it. He could see that the power level of those giant shrimps were very high. If those attacked their ship, it wouldn't be able to last for a long time.

Zhao Hai waved his hand as waves of seawater came out. Then a rush of water came into the air. This water also revealed a shrimp-shaped person.

From Zhao Hai's present usage of magic, it seems like it had been improved considerably. Before, his attacks were only equivalent to 7th ranks but now it seems like it had reach the realm of 8th rank.

Chapter 389 – First Contact with Merpeople

It was an unexpected surprise as well as a shock for Zhao Hai that his attack actually didn't do anything but make the seawater rise. The Merperson didn't appear on the surface.

Zhao Hai stared, he hasn't encountered a situation like this before. His magic attack actually didn't have any effect. He looked at the monitor, and saw that the Shrimp-man seem to have noticed the situation. It looked at the Haven and poised to attack.

Zhao Hai snorted, he waved his hand as a white mist came in contact with the water. As soon as the mist and the water came in contact, the seawater immediately froze, enveloping the Shrimp-man and his entourage of shrimp magic beasts.

With a move from Zhao Hai, the group of sea-dwellers appeared on the ship, trapped by the frozen ice.

Zhao Hai instantly received the shrimps into the Space. The Space issued a prompt, saying that the shrimps were level 20 magic beasts, equivalent to 4th ranks outside. It can do simple water element attacks. Can be raised in sea water, takes 14 hours to mature. Can reproduce five times and produces 8 offsprings each time.

Zhao Hai didn't care about this, he already knew that the shrimps weren't enough to upgrade the Space. Now that the Ranch had reached level 20, it became very difficult to upgrade it.

He looked at the Shrimp-man, he waved his hand and shattered the ice that surrounded the man. The Shrimp-man fell into the deck.

But the sea-dweller didn't make a move, Zhao Hai knew that he had been frozen stiff. He didn't worry and just stood there. Before long, the Shrimp-man finally began to move, albeit breathing extremely faintly. He looked like he would die at any time.

Zhao Hai made a ball made of seawater and made it surround the man, making the Shrimp-man feel much better.

The man looked coldly at Zhao Hai and said, “Youngster, you best release me immediately. Otherwise, my tribesmen wouldn’t let you off easily.”

Zhao Hai stared, he didn’t think that this Shrimp-man would actually speak human tongue. Although this language was very common in the continent, the other party was a merperson, how could a merperson speak the language?

Zhao Hai looked at him and curiously asked, “You can speak our language? Are you really a Merperson?”

The Shrimp-man looked at Zhao Hai and with said with disdain, “Hmph, speaking the same language isn’t strange. Us merpeople have already been speaking like this even before humans ever did.”

Zhao Hai looked at the Shrimp-man and said, “Really? Also, why did you attack my ship?”

The Shrimp-man said, “The entire deep sea is the domain of us, the sea-dwellers. And this part is my Shrimp Tribe’s domain. So why couldn’t I attack your ship?”

Zhao Hai frowned, “This is your Shrimp Tribe’s domain? Then why didn’t you attack us before? Why now?”

The Shrimp-man looked at Zhao Hai and said, “Ignorant human. Didn’t you know that this area belongs entirely to our race? When are you allowed to just make a fuss here? In the past, your Human experts and our Merman Experts came into an agreement that you humans can only pass by these waters. But earlier, I sensed an unusual in this part of the water so I came. And when I did, I saw your ship, and now you captured me. Human, know that I’ve already sent word to my tribe as soon as you got me. They will certainly come and rescue me.”

Zhao Hai frowned, he believed this member of the Shrimp Tribe.

There certainly was an agreement between humans and merpeople, just like the agreement between humans and the experts inside the carrion swamp. But when he said that he already sent word back to his tribe, Zhao Hai was doubtful. He knew for sure that he captured every single one of the Shrimp-man's group. So how could he possibly send word back to his people?

At this time, Cai'er came and informed Zhao Hai that there was a group of Shrimp Tribesmen heading towards here. Zhao Hai was stunned, he didn't think that the Shrimp-man actually said the truth. Since it was certain that the man's tribesmen were heading towards him, Zhao Hai observed the group. The Shrimp-man looked at Zhao Hai's face without any care, he certainly knew that his tribesmen were indeed coming.

Zhao Hai didn't care about the man as well since he was paying attention towards the monitor. They really were Shrimp-people, they looked exactly like the man on board the heaven. The group consists of seven people and were approaching quite fast.

Accompanying the seven people, there were also groups of shrimp-type magic beasts. This matter actually made Zhao Hai embarrassed, he didn't think that he would actually come in conflict with the sea-dwellers while at sea.

Zhao Hai looked at the Shrimp-man on his ship and said, "You're tribesmen are coming. I'll go and release you, but you have to promise to not cause me any more trouble."

Upon hearing Zhao Hai, the Shrimp-man couldn't help but be smug as he said, "Youngster, no need to waste too much breath. I'll be taking away your ship and make it into my toy. Otherwise, don't ever think of going into the sea ever again."

Hearing the Shrim-person's words, Zhao Hai's complexion couldn't help but change, he coldly snorted and said, "If you don't want me to go to the sea, then why do I have to comply? Don't think that I am afraid of you and your tribe. Look at this."

Then he waved his hand as white mist appeared again and froze the waters surrounding those seven tribesmen. Upon catching them, Zhao Hai brought them to the ship and place each of them inside a ball of seawater. The Shrimp tribesmen were too cold to talk.

Seeing Zhao Hai easily capture his tribesmen, the Shrimp-man looked flustered as he gave a threat to Zhao Hai, “Youngster, know that if you dare to kill us, all of the sea-dwellers will wage war with you. You will certainly end up with a bad ending.”

Zhao Hai replied with a serious tone, “I don’t believe that I would actually suffer a bad ending, I could just stay in the continent and live safely. Even if you sent some 9th ranks after me, they wouldn’t be able to threaten me.”

Zhao Hai knew from Jinan that sea-dwellers couldn’t survive for a long time when out of the water. Only their 9th ranks were able to survive for a long time out of the water. This was also the reason why the humans and the merpeople had stayed being at peace with each other. If this wasn’t the case, the sea-dwellers might have already waged war with the humans long ago.

The Shrimp tribesman stared as his complexion changed. He knew that their experts wouldn’t just be in conflict with the humans even though they vastly outnumber them. Humans weren’t easy to deal with, moreover, they still had an agreement with each other about human activity in their domains. Finally, this small conflict wouldn’t be enough to incite their 9th rank experts to make a move.

Thinking of this, the Shrimp-man couldn’t do anything but accept defeat, “Human, I promise to not attack your boat anymore. But you have to let me and my tribemates go, otherwise a conflict would surely occur.”

Seeing that the other party has admitted defeat, Zhao Hai also nodded, he didn’t want to be in a fight with sea-dwellers either., “I

don't have any enmity with you, so as long as you promise to not attack my ship, then I will immediately let you go. Right, perhaps you gentlemen may even want to make business with me. What do Merpeople need? I can buy them from the human domain and sell them to you. You can also exchange them with some of your special products."

The Shrimp-man stared, he didn't think that Zhao Hai would suddenly shift into doing business. At this time, he responded, "Human, are you sure about what you just said? Are you really willing to do business with us?"

Zhao Hai turned to look at the other Shrimp-men and saw that they had regained consciousness. Then he immediately returned his gaze to the Shrimp-man and said, "Absolutely."

The Shrimp-man's face elevated as he said, "That's fantastic! What do you want?"

Zhao Hai asked back, "What do you have?"

The man said, "Some aquatic magic beasts, some ores, pearls, corals, these things."

Zhao Hai nodded, "I want those, what do you want from me?"

The Shrimp-man said, "We want some land magic beasts, some ironworks, also some ceramics."

Zhao Hai nodded, "Not an issue, I can supply you with these things. I also have some grains, vegetables, and fruits. You just prepare those magic beasts, ores, pearls and corals."

The Shrimp-man nodded excitedly and said, "Good, by the way, my name is Crag. If you have your items, you can come straight back in this area. This is our tribe's domain, as soon as you arrive here, we'll immediately trade with you."

Zhao Hai agreed, "Good, then I'll head back and return in a few days. When that time comes, we'll trade." Then he waved his hand and returned the Shrimp tribesmen back to the sea.

When the group returned to the sea, Crag looked back at Zhao Hai and said, “Make sure to bring a lot of those items, we need a large number of them.”

Zhao Hai replied with a smile, “Okay, then that’s settled. Everyone, goodbye!” The Shrimp tribesmen waved at Zhao Hai and then immediately disappeared into the sea.

Laura and the others were stunned while all of these was happening. Only when the Shrimp people vanished into the sea did Laura recover. She looked at Zhao Hai as though she had seen a monster, “Brother Hai, you’re too good. You actually made a deal with Merpeople? This is the first time that I heard of this, you just made history!”

Hearing Laura, Zhao Hai couldn’t help but laugh, “Communication, always communicate. Sometimes, the reason why two sides go into war is because they didn’t have any proper talks with each other. Look, you can see that merpeople actually do need some human products while we could make use of theirs. With such two-sided benefits, why shouldn’t we do it?”

Laura smiled, “We should. With this, not only could we get some valuable pearls and special products, we could also get some Magic Beasts that could upgrade the Space. Maybe we could make the Space upgrade quickly with this method.”

Zhao Hai also smiled as he replied, “Moreover, there are too many good things in the deep sea. Cooperating with the seadwellers could only bring us benefits and no faults. Hehe. It seems like we should also go visit the Elven Forests and the Dwarven Fortresses. I’m interested in doing business with all of the different races in the continent.”

Laura and the others smiled, if they could really do business with all of the races in the continent, then they would certainly be the richest people in the future.

Meg gave a smile and said, “Elder Brother Hai, today is really our

lucky day. Not only did the Space explosively level up, we also got in contact with Merpeople. I think we should find a place to purchase all the their requests. The Ark Continent's day of annual celebration is close by. If we manage to bring these special products to the continent, they will certainly be popular.”

Zhao Hai nodded, he knew that the this annual celebration was Ark Continent's largest day. It was equivalent to Earth's new year's celebration. It was a holiday of the entire continent. It represented the old year's turnover into the new year.

This holiday was extremely important to humans, they would buy new clothes and prepare delicious food in celebration for sending of the old year and welcoming the new year.

This was like when China celebrates its Spring Festival. Every great family and clan knew that this day would be where all of their expenses were the greatest. If Zhao Hai and the others reveal these rare Merpeople products into the continent at this time, they would certainly earn a fortune.

Laura thought for a moment and said, “Since we cannot return to Sky Water City, we should go and find some other place. Fortunately, Sky Water City isn't the only port city inside Rosen Empire. I believe that as long as we don't go to the ports of the other nations, we should be clear of Radiant Church's interference. The Rosen Empire is currently at its peak of anti-church movement, I think that the Radiant Church wouldn't dare come at this time.”

Zhao Hai gave a nod and said, “Which city do you propose? I know absolutely nothing about the ports of Rosen Empire.”

Laura shook her head and said, “I also have no Idea. But I think Jinan should know. Jinan, do you know something about the other ports?”

Jinan who was standing nearby immediately responded, “Besides Sky Water City, there are two other famous cities present on the

empire's eastern coastline. They are Jade Water City and Rising Water City. Both of these cities are under the control of the Rosen Imperial Family. They are very prosperous, but not to the extent of rivalling Sky Water City. There are no other places like Sky Water City in the continent."

Zhao Hai nodded and asked, "Which city is nearer?"

Jinan replied, "Rising Water City will take 13 days from our current location. If we go to Jade Water City, it would take us about 17 days."

Zhao Hai gave a nod and said, "Very well then, let's head to Rising Water City!"

Chapter 390 – Multipurpose Processing Machine's Fee

Those who had not sailed the seas wouldn't know how boring and at the same time, stressful it was to do so.

What seemed like a calm ocean was actually fraught with perils such as undercurrents and sudden storms. This was especially so in a time where radar didn't exist. This made travelling at sea very risky for people in the Ark Continent.

Another bad thing was the fact that the ships built on the Ark Continent weren't built with any auxiliary functions. Some of the ships were so boring that sailing on them for months on end would actually make you crazy.

Fortunately, Zhao Hai's ships were manned by Undead. This made it so that navigating the seas wouldn't actually affect these Advance Level undead who already lost their human emotions. They were actually closer to robots than humans.

This time, the group's destination was Rising Water City. Rising Water City and Jade Water City were quite quite famous port cities on Rosen Empire's eastern coastline. But for other nations, Sky Water City was the best port city, it had the best location and routes. Therefore, there were not a lot of people who went to Rising Water City and Jade Water City, making their revenues much less than Sky Water City.

Although the Rosen Imperial Clan was quite envious regarding this situation, they weren't able to do anything about it. This was because in the beginning, Sky Water City wasn't this prosperous. Only when the city was handed over to the Calci Family did it slowly turn to become like what it was in the present. This was mainly due to the successive efforts made by generations of the Calci Family.

Even if both the Rising Water City and Jade Water City were heavily invested upon by the Imperial Clan, its management clearly wasn't that good. This was because the Clan's internal struggles, compared to the Calci Family, were much more intense. Therefore, the two cities couldn't catch up to Sky Water City.

Yes, the surface revenue of Rising Water City and Jade Water City certainly seemed to be lower than Sky Water City, but when you really get into the hidden profits that the two cities produced, this was not the case. If you calculate the money moving around in the shadows, the revenue produced by each of the two cities were actually bigger than Sky Water City.

There was a reason for this. Sky Water City was the purse of the Calci Family, it provided all the funds that the family needed. On the other hand, Jade Water City and Rising Water City were places that the Rosen Imperial Clan uses to test their Princes. The Rosen Emperor would give these two cities, as well as other Imperial controlled cities, to pre-selected candidates for successorship. Then he made them manage these cities and see who could create the most revenue. The one who won this competition would gain big points in the fight for the throne.

As you can imagine, the managing of these two parties were clearly very different. On one hand, a family depended on a city for their future expenses, thus, they would certainly take good care of it. On the other hand, the city was used as a test. After a few years or decades, the city wouldn't have the same owner. In these few years, one would do all that he could to make the most money out of the city.

This seemed like two different kinds of investments. One was the type where you invest in something and slowly turning it into a goose that lays golden eggs. And the other one was the type where you always fish for short term investments, making profits, and then walking away. Two totally different philosophies.

Although there was this reason, Zhao Hai and the others must

still head to Rising Water City. Not only did they decide to go there because of the purchase of items, they also wanted to establish a storefront. It would also be best if they could get in contact with a businessman to make a partnership with. With this, they wouldn't need to depend too much on the Calci Family.

The action made by the Calci Family made Zhao Hai's heart sound an alarm. The majority of their operations were actually centered on the Calci Family, this wasn't a good thing. They should be looking for another cooperation. Otherwise, the people from the family would use this scenario to stick it to Zhao Hai. Although he didn't fear the Calci Family, the moves that the family could employ would certainly make Zhao Hai suffer some losses.

Because of this, Zhao Hai became more adamant on going to Rising Water City. He wanted to see the situation there and see if there was an opportunity to make another partnership. This would make the Calci Family understand that Zhao Hai would be able to survive without their help.

Although Zhao Hai was a member of the League of Dark Mages, he didn't have that huge sense of belonging to the organization. This was because he didn't actually practice magic.

The things that Smith did initially made him think of the League quite well. But with the Calci Family's actions, all of those thoughts were shattered.

Zhao Hai sympathizes with the Dark Mages, but he wasn't a saint. In the beginning, when everyone was out to get rid of him, nobody helped other than Grandpa Green and those others who were loyal and devoted to the Buda Clan. Without them, Adam would have already been dead, and Zhao Hai wouldn't exist.

At first, Zhao Hai joined the League of Dark Mages since he saw that it was quite free, with only a few rules. He also wanted to make use of the League to deal with the Radiant Church. But if the people of the organization decided to act like this to him, then

there was no point in staying there.

...

The ship continued to sail slowly. Today was the third day of their trip, this was also a special day for Zhao Hai. It was because Cai'er will finally plant the medicinal seeds that the Space had given to him. The seeds had very high levels, and would take several days to mature. With his calculations, Zhao Hai reckoned that he must wait until they reached Rising Water City before he could make the Detoxification Potion.

Although the seeds were just being planted today, Zhao Hai and the others still stood by and observed. This was because this matter was extremely important for them.

Zhao Hai was very clear that these seeds represented hope, a hope that one day he could be normal again. Also, because of this hope, Zhao Hai had been investigating how the Multipurpose Processing Machine worked.

The Multipurpose Processing Machine was really very mysterious, as long as you have money, it could process everything for you. The amount of money needed depends on what you wanted to process. For example, if Zhao Hai wanted to process his antidote, the processing charge would be a thousand gold coins. If he wanted to make a Spatial Equipment, he needs to pay 10 thousand gold coins. And if you want Advanced Level Spatial Equipment, the charge would increase accordingly, about 1 million gold coins. Naturally, the processing time would also be equally high.

However, if you wanted to process unshelled Bamboo Rice into edible grains, you only need one gold coin per day; the same was true for white flour. The price for making liquor also wasn't too high, it wouldn't exceed 50 gold coins. The process was very cost-effective.

But this processing fee depended on the fact that you had enough

materials to supply. If you don't have materials, like the additives to change the flavor of the liquor that you're making, this would not do. Of course, you can still make it, but you need to purchase those materials from the factory, and its price would certainly hurt your pockets.

Moreover, if the Space didn't have a kind of plant, the machine could make some seeds for you. You only need to provide some other plant, then some gold coins, and you could receive your seed. Naturally, the charge for this operation isn't cheap, after all, the Space hopes that you would provide these plants and upgrade the Space by procuring them from outside. Additionally, you shouldn't hope of using the Processing machine to upgrade the Space, since all of the seeds made by the machine couldn't provide any experience.

Because of these peculiarities, Zhao Hai decided to stop planting Bamboo Rice in Iron Mountain Fort, allowing people to do other things.

Also, Zhao Hai didn't use the Machine to make milk wine. Currently, he is using the machine to process his food and make fruit oils. Things like wool products and liquor were still made inside the workshops of Iron Mountain Fort. This was because Zhao Hai reckoned that compared to the costs of operating the Machine, manpower was still more efficient for those products.

Originally, the manpower inside Iron Mountain Fort was insufficient. Although they got several thousand people, there were those who wouldn't be able to handle heavy labor, like the elderly and the children. Only those young men and women were being busy doing a lot of things and their numbers were still not enough. Because of this, there were a lot of undeads doing jobs inside the fort.

But now it was good that Zhao Hai acquired the Processing Machine. The machine could do all the work, especially for wool products.

Zhao Hai tried using the machine to make blankets, and they were very good. You can also choose the style and decorations in them. However, the blankets produced by the machine were different from those produced outside. Also, the processing fee wasn't low, 50 gold coins. For this amount of money, the beastmen could produce 20 blankets. So Zhao Hai gave up on using the machine to produce wool products.

Zhao Hai also understood that this wasn't a mistake. The value of gold coins inside the Space was vastly different from its value outside. There was only one type of currency inside the Space, which was exactly the gold coin. A gold coin inside the Space was like a copper coin outside. But if you take the same gold coin outside the Space, its value would certainly be much higher.

The reason why the machine's processing charge for making edible rice and flour were low was because the bamboo rice and wheat value inside the Space weren't very high. If Zhao Hai decided to sell the rice and flour to the Space, it wouldn't be as profitable as selling it to the continent. This made Zhao Hai know that the values of the currency inside and outside the Space was very different.

Zhao Hai wasn't a person who was dead-set on making profits. If he were, he would've just employed his undead to do all of the jobs needed so that he didn't need to pay for labor. But if he did that, the slaves' standard of living will certainly drop. Zhao Hai didn't want to do that, he wanted his people to live a much better life.

Chapter 391 – Two Days

Zhao Hai dealt with the matters inside the Space while also handling the matters back at Iron Mountain Fort. Naturally, the information about the Space's upgrades as well as the fact about detoxification was told to Green and the others.

Green was very excited that tears streamed down from his face. For him, there was no better news than this. As long as Zhao Hai recovers, they wouldn't need to fear for the scenario where the Space would suddenly vanish. Green and the others were extremely glad, nothing was more important than Zhao Hai recovering.

...

Time passed as the Haven continued on travelling. It was already the tenth day after they met the Shrimp tribesmen. The things back in Iron Mountain Fort were almost taken care of, and some of the medicinal herbs were already collected. However, the quantity needed was still not enough, so they need wait for three days for the herbs to become fully collected. Zhao Hai could start processing the antidote by then.

At this time, the Fruit Trees as well as the Bread Trees were already planted. But they didn't yield any fruit yet since their growth rate was the same as outside. So there wasn't anything to see from them right now.

The Processing Factories also weren't idling. They had already processed all of the rice and wheat. Now they were currently processing the fruit oil.

This time, a large number of animals could now be raised inside the Ranch so Zhao Hai placed his argalis inside the Space. At this time, Zhao Hai understood that the Ranch didn't need to have feed anymore. This was because the animals could now graze from the ground as well as hunt other animals for meat. Herbivores would

eat grass while carnivores would eat the herbivores.

Because of the recent upgrades, all the grass present in the Ranch could now be eaten. This also made the animals undergo migration from time to time. Because of this, Zhao Hai wasn't worried that the Ranch would get destroyed. Additionally, Mu'er was also present, so Zhao Hai didn't need to worry about the animals.

Zhao Hai also noticed that the grasses inside the Ranch grew much faster than those outside. Although it was not as fast as the Farm, it was not that much slower either.

The reason why Zhao Hai allowed the carnivores to hunt the herbivores was so that the population of herbivores would be controlled. The small world needed to be balanced. If the herbivores were left to their own, they would incessantly multiply, eating all of the grasses in the world and destroying it in the process. Zhao Hai didn't want this to happen, so he established a food chain inside the Ranch.

Obviously, this process certainly made Zhao Hai lose a lot of money. After all, these carnivores must eat meat. But Zhao Hai didn't worry, as long as a stable food chain was created, the Ranch wouldn't be destroyed.

The Ranch had enough food for the numerous herbivores that Zhao Hai released, but the carnivores present weren't a lot; this made it an incomplete food chain. With the number of prey vastly outnumbering the predators, it was an inevitability that the Ranch would run out of food. However, this was Zhao Hai's Ranch, not nature. Those herbivores would still be killed for meat, not many would be left.

Suddenly, Zhao Hai remembered that all of these considerations were of no importance. The Ranch indeed became a small world, but the situation still remained unchanged. Like before, the animals present here were all either digitally generated, or digitally raised, it was just the way they were raised that was

different.

Zhao Hai regarded this situation as a serious matter, if he continues with the current model, sooner or later the number of beasts that he would raise could match those that were herded by the Beastmen. This was a terrifying thing, when this time comes, he wouldn't be able to sell those beasts outside. Because if he does, the continent's economy will certainly collapse, causing chaos all over the place.

But it was fortunate that he already had Mu'er to manage the Ranch. Zhao Hai could just give an order to control the number of beasts inside the Space so that they wouldn't increase too quickly as well as decrease too quickly. All of these responsibilities were handed over to Mu'er.

Although the Ranch had all of those shortcomings, Zhao Hai still thought that it was very useful. With those carnivores constantly hunting inside the Space, their natural instincts would get sharper and sharper as time passed by. This made them true to their wild nature while inside the Space.

Their fighting strengths would be more formidable, moreover they were all completely obedient to Zhao Hai. If Zhao Hai needed them to fight later on, he could just release them for battle.

At this moment, the beasts with the most population were the bulls, argali, and horses. Next in line were blood hawks, and moonlight lions. Bulls and argali were raised for their meat, horses for transportation, while the blood hawks and moonlight lions were for fighting strength.

Aside from these land magic beasts, the Ranch was also raising massive amounts of aquatic magic beasts. Also, the aquatic food chain was more complete than the land food chain. After all, Zhao Hai fully absorbed seawater into the Space, so naturally, he would be absorbing complete food chains along with it.

Zhao Hai now understood why it was still called a small world, it

wasn't a mature world since there were still some flaws here and there, thus the title small world.

But generally speaking, Zhao Hai was very satisfied regarding this small world of his. So long as he continues to upgrade the Space, then one day it will completely evolve into a complete world.

With the matters of the Space being good overall, Zhao Hai didn't have much worries. He could just give instructions whenever he felt like changing something.

Looking at the Space's changes day by day, Zhao Hai became very satisfied. After all, this place was his own personal domain.

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Three days went by quickly, Rising Water City was already in sight. As long as they travel for half a day, Zhao Hai and the others would be able to enter Rising Water City's harbor.

However, Zhao Hai wasn't paying any attention to the city right now. He was currently in the Space, in front of the Multipurpose Processing Machine. By his side was a pile of medicinal herbs.

Laura and the others were also right by his side, anxiously looking at the machine and waiting for Zhao Hai to press the button. Zhao Hai didn't delay, he immediately pressed the button meant for depositing the materials.

When the button was pressed, a flash of white light came, then the pile of herbs by Zhao Hai's side disappeared completely. Zhao Hai pressed the 'Process' button and selected the item that he wanted, the Detoxification Potion. Then finally he pressed the 'Begin' button. The Space deducted his balance by 10 thousand gold coins as the machine sprang into action. A projection popped up, showing Zhao Hai digits that were very important to him. The figure showed 48 hours.

Zhao Hai couldn't help but be relieved, in two day's time, he

would be forever be cured of his affliction that was caused by the “Water of Nothingness”. He can finally go back to being an ordinary person.

Laura and the others looked at the numbers that were projected above. They also understood what those number represented. Laura sighed with relief as she said, “Brother Hai, in two days, two days! You can finally get rid of your poison.”

Zhao Hai nodded, then he excitedly looked at Laura and Meg as he smiled, “Yes, in two days, I can finally restore my body to what it originally was.”

Meg shed tears as she hugged Zhao Hai. She didn’t realize that she was crying, she was too happy. Zhao Hai’s poison was always a heavy stone in their hearts. As long as Zhao Hai’s poison went unsolved, they wouldn’t be able to sleep comfortably. Now that in two days, Zhao Hai would be cured, the dark clouds plaguing the Buda Family would finally dissipate.

Zhao Hai patted Meg’s back gently as he smiled and said, “It’s okay, don’t cry. Everything will be alright after two days. Your young master can finally learn martial arts, we should be happy. We’ll show those people who looked down on us the fully revived Buda Clan.”

Meg was still tearing up while she nodded, she believed that Zhao Hai could achieve anything. From the beginning, she had unconditional trust towards Zhao Hai, this was because Zhao Hai was her world.

Laura’s tears were also flowing, she loved Zhao Hai. But his poison was a very big deal to her. This was because Zhao Hai’s poison could be inherited, if they had a child in the future, their children would also have this poison inside of them, making them unable to study martial arts as well as magic.

In Ark Continent, someone who couldn’t practice martial arts or magic was considered a waste. Laura was somewhat of an prideful

person, how could she allow her children to be such wastes?

But she loved Zhao Hai very much, and she decided to marry him in the future. So she just hoped that Zhao Hai could cure his affliction. Now that the day had come, she was extremely happy.

Looking at Laura's appearance, Zhao Hai couldn't help but smile. He lifted his arm to create an empty space, Laura looked at Zhao Hai and immediately threw herself into Zhao Hai's arms, still with tears flowing down her cheeks.

Green and the others weren't with them today, so the only other people present were Shue and Shun. Regarding Zhao Hai's development, the two of them were also quite happy. They had made a Blood Oath with Zhao Hai, so naturally they would hope that their master would have a bright future. After they knew Zhao Hai's real identity, they also knew that he drank the Water of Nothingness, this was the matter that they worried very much about.

Ever since the two followed Zhao Hai, their lives had been very comfortable. Zhao Hai put their lives in order, provided them with delicious food, while at the same time taking the two of them away from their previous lives that were full of dangers. This made the two extremely grateful to their young master, so they regarded the matter of his poison very highly.

Now that the matter was close to being solved, with Zhao Hai being healthy again, they thought that things couldn't get any better. The return of the Buda Clan was getting closer and closer.

After some time, the group calmed their emotions down and went out of the Space. The Haven was now entering the harbor, they had no choice but disembark from the ship.

Chapter 392 – Call Them

Standing in front of the ship, Zhao Hai gazed at the distant Rising Water City. The size of the city wasn't as large as Sky Water City, but the traffic of ships present were quite the same.

Zhao Hai smiled faintly as he turned his head, "Looking at the size of Rising Water City, it seems like it is worse than Sky Water City. But it looks like it is just as bustling here. It'll be a good idea to have a shop at this place. Right, is there a Shelley Hotel here? Perhaps we can work together with them."

Laura smiled, "It has, how could there be no Shelley Hotel in a city such as this? We should find them and get into contact, I believe that they would be happy. Brother Hai, how about we reduce the supply of fire fish and milk wine that we are giving to Brother Smith, to give the Calci Family a warning."

Zhao Hai shook his head and said, "Consider that finished, I will still take into account Brother Smith's face on this matter. But if the Calci Family continues to push me, then I will end my cooperation with them. Let's see what they're going to do about that."

Laura nodded and said, "Very well, let's give Brother Smith some face and have him speak to the family in our behalf. Let's see Calci Family's response, if they still go too far, hmph, then don't blame me."

Zhao Hai looked at Laura's appearance and showed a faint smile and said, "This is the Laura that I know, looking like a very capable woman. Haha. Good, if they still dare try to deal with us, then we won't be polite anymore."

While they were talking, the ship slowly approached Rising Water City. The harbor of the city was much worse than Sky Water City. The dock looked very messy, ships could hardly find any place to dock in.

Zhao Hai knew that this should be the public pier. There was no need to pay in order to dock here, thus the numerous ships. But this was also the smallest and most chaotic ship terminal in the city.

There were other docks nearby. They were quite large, and they had good security as well. There were even porters present, but one needs to pay money in order to dock on those places.

This was Rosen Empire's method, they would lower taxes on some areas to attract people. Upon arriving, one would get exempted from tax, but there were even more places to spend some money. In the end, if you calculate all of your expenses, they would come out to be even greater than what would be if you just paid your tax.

Zhao Hai looked at the public harbor and knew that there was no way that they could find their place there. So he had Jinan maneuver the ship towards those paid docks.

Paid docks were certainly a lot better, the water were very spacious, the pier was also very clean. There were even specialized people tasked in maintaining public security. All matters on these docks appeared to be in pristine order.

When Zhao Hai saw these docks, he couldn't help but smile bitterly. He thought about those big companies back on Earth. The companies would willingly slash their product's prices to the point of suffering losses just to make profits on the extra services. He didn't expect that someone on the Ark Continent would actually think of the same method.

Zhao Hai's group stopped on a place in the dock. They paid the supervisor for the fee and then got on the carriage to head towards the city.

Upon entering Rising Water City, Zhao Hai and the others couldn't help but stare. They couldn't say that the streets of the city were greater than those of Sky Water City, on the contrary,

they were quite awful. However, the shops on both sides of the street were very numerous, they had the same liveliness as Sky Water City.

This was a port city, so businesses should be doing very well, Zhao Hai was already used to this fact. He looked at the shops on both sides of the street and turned his head to Shun, “Shun, go to those shops and see if there are any products worth noting, also, take note of the prices of the goods here. Shue, let’s go to the hotel and take a rest.”

The two complied, Shue ushered the carriage to head towards the direction of the Shelley Hotel while Shun went out to get some information. Back at the pier, Zhao Hai had already asked for the directions of the hotel, so they didn’t need to worry about getting lost.

Zhao Hai and the others quickly arrived at the Shelley Hotel. Although Rising Water City’s storefronts didn’t look very nice, the Shelley Hotel in this city was not the same. The outside of the hotel was extremely clean along with its front facade. There were also people dedicated to maintaining public security outside, fully exhibiting the quality of the hotel.

Just as Zhao Hai’s bull-pulled carriage stopped in front of the hotel, a person wearing silk clothes immediately went out to greet them. The man looked over 50 years old with a long and skinny body. With his face full of smiles, one would be able to feel a very kind atmosphere around him.

When Zhao Hai disembarked from the carriage, the man went to Zhao Hai and greeted him, “This one is Ronaldo, the manager of Rising Water City’s Shelley Hotel. This one welcomes Mister Zhao Hai.”

Zhao Hai stared at Ronaldo and said, “You know me?”

Ronaldo smiled faintly and said, “I do. There is no Shelley Hotel Manager in the continent that doesn’t recognize Mister Zhao Hai.

Mister, please come in, you're always a distinguished guest in our hotels."

Zhao Hai laughed and said, "I won't be polite then." Seeing the two talking and walking towards the hotel, the guests became quite alarmed. One should know that the hotel was not only for the rich, it was also quite expensive. Adding on to the fact that the Shelley Hotel had recently ousted Grand Duke Lionheart's business, the managers of their hotels had become quite the personalities. They wouldn't generally greet any ordinary person.

When the people saw that Ronaldo was extremely courteous towards Zhao Hai, they felt confused. This was because they didn't know if Zhao Hai actually had any status.

During that time, when a noble looking person just went out of the hotel, he actually heard the exchange of dialog between Ronaldo and Zhao Hai. Upon hearing their words, the person's eyes lit up, he immediately went toward his own carriage and rushed towards the direction of the City Lord's Mansion.

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After Zhao Hai entered the hotel's reception hall, some people immediately went and served them some tea. Ronaldo and Zhao Hai drank a mouthful as the former said, "When I heard that mister came, I initially wanted to come greet mister at the pier. But I didn't think that mister would actually arrive at the hotel too quickly, this is quite embarrassing."

Zhao hai smiled and said, "Manager Ronaldo is too polite. I'm not an influential person, coming to greet me personally is too much. I wouldn't dare, I wouldn't dare...."

Ronaldo smiled and said, "Mister is also too polite, mister offered quite a huge helping hand to the Shelley Family. It should be appropriate for me to personally greet mister. Anyway, why did mister come to Rising Water City? Is there anything we could help you with?"

Zhao Hai gave a smile and replied, “There is actually a reason why I came. I want to set up a shop inside Rising Water City. The bigger the shop, the better. I hope the manager could help me with this.”

Ronaldo returned the smile and nodded, “Mister is too polite, this matter is no big deal. I’ll personally have someone inquire around. What price would be alright for mister?”

Zhao Hai replied, “The price isn’t an issue. I just want a shop right now and open as soon as possible. It’ll handle both wholesale and retail goods. Therefore, the shop’s location should be good, it also needed to be able to store goods. Transportation should also be convenient.”

Ronaldo nodded and said, “Very well, these things are quite easy to do, mister can be relieved. I’ll certainly go and find the best location as soon as possible. Right, if mister plans to set up shop here, you still have some formalities to do. I don’t know if mister is already prepared for this? If mister isn’t, the hotel could lend you a hand.”

Zhao Hai laughed and said, “Thank you, Manager Ronaldo. To be honest, I really don’t understand about any of the matters inside Rising Water City. I’ll really have to rely on the manager here. How about this, I’ll give an additional 5,000 fire fishes to the Shelley Family each month. What does Manager think about this?”

Ronaldo stared, he was pleasantly surprised as he said, “Mister is too generous. Even if mister didn’t reward the hotel, we would still help you with this matter. Also, mister, these fire fire fishes wouldn’t be taken away from the Calci Family’s share right? Won’t mister feel awkward?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, “Not awkward. I reckon you have already heard about the Calci Family. Now I’m just waiting for the family’s next move, if they become too overbearing, then I can only find other people to cooperate with.”

Ronaldo's eyes lit up brightly, just like what Zhao Hai said, he already knew about the matter between Zhao Hai and the Calci Family. Because of this, he acted very enthusiastic towards Zhao Hai. Since if the Calci Family manages to make the wrong move, there would be some excess of fire fishes on Zhao Hai's hands. If the Shelley Family could get their hands on these fishes, the family could surely make a ton of money.

The Shelley Family didn't fear the Calci Family. Although the Calci Family was fierce, it was impossible for them to fully uproot the Shelley Family. After all, outside of Rosen Empire, the Shelley Family had more influence than the Calci family.

However, merchant clans always wanted to hold onto wealth. So if they could prevent falling out with the Calci Family, they would. After all, compared to the entire business of the Shelley Family, the fire fishes were still a small business.

But Ronaldo also understood what Zhao Hai was implying. It was just like what Marriott reported, this Zhao Hai wasn't a simple person.

At the thought of this, Ronaldo stood up and bowed to Zhao Hai, "Well then, this one will have to busy himself, mister. Your rooms have already been prepared as well as your meals. Mister can rest first while I handle the matters that you requested."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "I thank the manager for his troubles." Then he walked with Ronaldo outside as the latter arranged someone to lead Zhao Hai's group to their accommodations.

Ronaldo had arranged for Zhao Hai's group to have the best rooms of the hotel. He also instructed the attendants to give Zhao Hai the highest level of hospitality. If somebody dared to cause problems, Ronaldo wouldn't express mercy.

Just after Zhao Hai and the others were settled inside their room, a knock was suddenly heard on the door. Shue immediately went to the door and opened it, revealing the meal that Ronaldo had

prepared for them. The dishes looked very delicious and appetizing, it clearly showed how well regarded they were by the hotel.

Zhao Hai and the others didn't become polite, they immediately went and enjoyed the dishes that the hotel prepared for them. At this time, another knock was heard, when Shue went and opened it to take a look, what he saw was Shun.

After passing through the door, Shun gave Zhao Hai a bow and said, "Young Master, I have asked around, there are quite a lot of goods here. But compared to Sky Water City, there are more low-quality goods present. Because of this, the goods sold in this city are much cheaper than those at Sky Water City."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "Good, let's eat first. After the meal, we'll go around and scout for good shop locations as well as products that the Merpeople wanted. Then we'll go back out at sea as soon as possible to trade with them."

Shun gave a nod, then joined the others in the table to eat a meal. Laura who was sitting gave a frown and asked, "Brother Hai, did you think about the people that we'll have to hand the shop's management to? The slaves back at Iron Mountain Fort wouldn't do, we can manage them back at the fort but not here. I think we need to recruit a few trustworthy people."

Hearing what Laura just said. Zhao Hai couldn't help but smiled and say, "What? Didn't you have some good people we can make us of? This is also good since we don't need to worry about their loyalty. Those people you have back at the Purcell Duchy aren't doing anything anyway, we should call them over."

Laura's face lit up, "Right, if we don't get in contact with them for quite some time, they would certainly feel strange. Since we cannot return to Purcell Duchy and happen to open a shop, we should bring them over here."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "After our meal, you should

write a letter for them and have it sent via blood hawks from Stony Mountain. Go make them head outside Casa City to gather and I'll go and meet them."

Laura nodded and said, "Brother Hai, I think you should also send a letter to Uncle Evan and tell him about this matter and have him prepare."

Zhao Hai smiled, "Be relieved, I'll go arrange it. I think Uncle Evan couldn't wait to get rid of your people. This way, Magic Lily Store would be completely under his control."

Hearing this, Laura sighed. Magic Lily Store was something she established. It was just a pity that she had to hand it over to someone else.

Looking at her appearance, Zhao Hai gave a smile, "Don't be sad, the Magic Lily stores that you built aren't your largest assets anyway, it was those people who were nurtured under your influence. Those people are good resources, we must provide them with a stage to exhibit their talents to the limit. By the way, don't forget to tell them to bring their entire families."

Laura gave a smile and replied, "Don't worry, I'll tell them. I shall also inform them that this wouldn't be the only store that we'll open. If the matter back at Sky Water City gets resolved, we would need people to manage our shop there as well. Right, Brother Hai, don't you think that Iron Mountain Fort needs a bit more managing staff? How about we send some of my people over there as well?"

Zhao Hai nodded, but at this time, another knock was heard on the door.

Chapter 393 – Charlie

Zhao Hai stared blankly when he heard the knock. It was because he already told the hotel attendants to not disturb him if there's nothing important going on. He believed that the hotel attendants wouldn't dare disregard his instructions.

When someone knocked on the door the first time, Zhao Hai expected it to be Shun, and it turned out to be him. But who would knock on the door this time? Zhao Hai waved his hand as the monitor appeared. The group immediately saw a man dressed in gorgeous clothes standing outside. What was bizarre about this man was the fact that even though he wore good quality and well-made clothes, the appearance of his garments seem to be those worn by servants.

The clothes of a servant were actually more magnificent than most nobles? When Zhao Hai and the others analyzed the man's clothes, they couldn't help but feel confused.

However, Zhao Hai knew that for a servant to be able to dress like this, his master should be anything but simple. Zhao Hai gestured to Shun, Shun gave a nod as he opened the door.

Right outside the door was the servant. Although he had magnificent clothes, the servant still acted very humble. When he saw Shun open the door, the man politely gave a small bow and said, "Hello, this one seeks an audience with Mister Zhao Hai."

Looking at the man's very polite attitude, Shun didn't decrease his vigilance even by a bit, he looked at the man and said, "Can I ask why you are here? Why do you need to meet the young master?"

The servant showed a faint smile and said, "This one is just a servant, here to convey a message from my master. It's just that the identity of my master is quite special, so this servant was the only one that came to see mister Zhao Hai."

Just as Shun was facing a dilemma, Zhao Hai's voice came, "Shun, make him enter."

After listening to Zhao Hai's instruction, Shun immediately complied then turned and gave a gesture towards the man. Then the well-dressed servant entered the room.

Zhao Hai was now sitting inside the living room. Naturally, the servant recognized Zhao Hai, so he immediately went towards him and gave a bow, "Little Liru has seen Mister Zhao Hai. My master is currently at his accommodation and is inviting mister Zhao Hai over."

Although his tone of voice was very polite, the atmosphere around the servant revealed a sort of pressure that seems to don't accept refusal. This made Zhao Hai quite confused, he didn't know what this servant was planning to do.

However, Zhao Hai wasn't affected too much. He just looked at the servant and said, "Can you tell me the identity of your master? You should know that I have a lot of enemies in the continent, I wouldn't just accept casual invitations."

Liru froze for a moment, but he still continued to look at Zhao Hai and said, "Mister Zhao Hai, I really can't just say the name of my master. Just know that my master is very sincere this time. I ask you to please accept his invitation."

Zhao Hai frowned as he stared at the servant, "The people in this room can certainly be trusted, I'll vouch for it. If you really don't intend to tell me, then I'm sorry, I don't like meeting with people who likes to hide things from me."

After listening to Zhao Hai, Liru's expression couldn't help but sink. He looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Mister, since you really wanted to know. My master who wanted to meet you is His Highness Rosen Empire's Third Prince."

Zhao Hai stared blankly, with a puzzled look he asked, "If His

Highness the Third Prince wanted to meet me, then why does he have to be quite mysterious? Is something wrong?"

Looking that Zhao Hai seemed to be confused, the servant said with a light tone, "I didn't realize that mister wasn't informed, I have misunderstood mister. Rising Water City is under the control of the Second Prince while Jade Water City belonged to the Third Prince. His highness' trip this time is a secret matter. He couldn't just go out into the city since he is afraid of alerting the Second Prince. So this time when His Highness wanted to meet Mister Zhao Hai, he could only request for a secret meeting."

Zhao Hai understood, so he didn't have any more worried. He turned to the servant and said, "Good, lead the way." He stood as he said that.

Seeing at Zhao Hai accepted to come with him, Liru finally relaxed. He feared that Zhao Hai would change his mind, so Liru immediately led him out.

Zhao Hai and Liru went to the back of the hotel where a carriage was already waiting for them, inside one of the courtyards. Without being polite, Zhao Hai immediately sat inside the vehicle.

The carriage looked extremely ordinary, it lacked even a smidgen of special quality material. It was only quite big, can fit about five or six people. Zhao Hai took Shun and Shue with him, Liru was driving the carriage at front.

Zhao Hai initially thought that Liru was just having unnecessary caution. What was the point in being too serious? However, he changed his mind when he thought more deeply about Liru's words and actions. Liru might be afraid because the battle between the princes may have reached quite a heated period. If this was so, there was enough reason for the Third Prince to be very careful.

But Zhao Hai was even more confused when he recalled that the Rosen Empire's King was still quite healthy. Under such circumstance, it was quite confusing for the princes to be this

vigorous in their battle.

The carriage went out of the hotel and into the busy street outside. They went around quite a few times before stopping at a house. Although this was the back side of the house, the light coming from the door made it look quite unordinary. The look on the door was more intricate than what most people would use.

The carriage didn't stop and directly entered the house before completely stopping on a parking space. Liru asked Zhao Hai to disembark, Zhao Hai became curious, he wanted to know why the Third Prince called him over.

Under Liru's guidance, the group passed through several courtyards before arriving at a small courtyard. This courtyard wasn't that large, about the same size as Sweet Plum Courtyard. However, this place didn't have any plum blossoms, instead, it had some ornamental trees. Zhao Hai couldn't name them, but this made this place even more distinctive.

When the group arrived at the courtyard, there were two people already standing at the front door. One looked about 50 years old and wore a magnificent merchant's garment on his fatty body. The fellow looked very big, just like a meat mountain that was standing there. What made Zhao Hai surprised was that even though the man was a literal meatball, he didn't look like he was exerting any effort in staying up. This certainly showed that the man had quite the strength.

The other person wore a very ordinary noble's clothing, not looking very magnificent. He was about 30 years old and had a very gentle look. The person was very well groomed, although he was just standing there, the atmosphere around him commanded respect and superiority.

Liru went towards the 30-year old man and said, "Your Highness, this is Mister Zhao Hai." The man nodded and smiled at Zhao Hai, "Please forgive Charlie for the disrespect, mister. The situation

didn't leave me with enough choices.”

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile and said, “This one has seen Prince Charlie. His highness is too polite, it is my honor to be invited by Your Highness.”

Charlie smiled faintly and said, ‘Mister is too courteous. Let me introduce mister to Rising Water City’s famous sea merchant, Aonas.”

Zhao Hai bowed and said, “Zhao Hai pays his respects to Mister Aonas.”

Aona’s’ flabby face rippled as he smiled, “Mister is too kind. Your Highness, Mister, please.” Then he led the two men inside the living room of the house.

After settling in the living room, Liru immediately served the group with a cup of tea. When the group already had a few sips of the tea, Charlie opened his mouth, “This time when I came to handle some matters in Rising Water City, I came to hear about mister’s arrival. So I took the liberty of inviting mister over, I hope you could forgive my disrespect.”

Zhao Hai gave a smile and said, “You’re highness is too polite. Let’s forget about being disrespectful, what did Your Highness look for me for?”

Charlie stared, he didn’t think that Zhao Hai would be so direct. He could only show a faint smile as he replied, “Mister is really a straightforward person, not beating around the bush. This time, I asked mister to come to discuss whether I could have the honor of having a partnership with mister or not.”

Zhao Hai had already expected this point. Except for the products that he had, there were no other qualities of him that other people could remember. So when Charlie got to the point, Zhao Hai wasn’t surprised. He just looked at Charlie and said, “May I know which business Your Highness wanted to cooperate with me?”

Charlie looked at Zhao Hai and smiled, “I know that mister is currently working with the Shelley Family and the Calci Family for some business. I’m also interested about your fire fishes and milk wine. I just don’t know if mister can also cooperate with me?”

Zhao Hai looked at Charlie and said, “Your Highness, to tell you the truth, it isn’t impossible to work with you. The products that I supply the Calci Family and the Shelley Family which were 55 thousand jin of fire fish and 50 thousand jin of milk wine aren’t my limit. I can provide you with 45 thousand jin of fire fishes as well as 50 thousand jin of milk wine per month. Is Your Highness satisfied with this?”

Zhao Hai’s words were actually a probe towards Charlie. He wanted to see whether the prince wanted to snatch both the Calci’s and the Shelley’s share of milk wine and fire fish. If he did, then that meant that he didn’t care about offending the two families. Zhao Hai also wanted to see whether he would acquiesce if there was a way of avoiding to offend the families. If Charlie really wanted the shares of the two families, then Zhao Hai would have to think twice about their cooperation. This was because it meant that the prince most likely held a grievance towards the two families.

When he heard what Zhao Hai just said, Charlie was dumbfounded, he wore a happy expression as he said, “Mister is really telling the truth?”

Zhao Hai nodded and replied, “I won’t dare deceive Your Highness, of course it is real.” Seeing Charlie’s reaction, Zhao Hai had found his answer.

Sure enough, Charlie smiled and said, “Good, good, that is good. Mister can rest assured that I’ll also accept the same price that you give the Calci and Shelley Families. I certainly wouldn’t let mister suffer a loss.”

Chapter 394 – Sincerity

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “I don’t have to worry about that, but where does your highness want the stuff delivered? I think you won’t find it comfortable in Sky Water City?”

Charlie smiled and said, “Naturally not in Sky Water City. I’d want mister to deliver to my domain, Jade Water City, I wonder if that is possible?”

Zhao Hai nodded, “Of course it’s possible. I’ll supply you starting next month and pay me whenever the products arrive. How does your highness think about this?”

Charlie gave a smile and said, “Thanks for understanding, I really still have a lot to prepare. Does mister have any other products? I see that you have milk wine, so I reckoned mister should have a good relationship with the Beastmen.”

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “It’s just like what your highness said, I actually have a good relationship with the Bull-Headed Race. Currently, I have some wool products on hand, is your highness interested in those?”

When Charlie heard Zhao Hai’s response, he secretly nodded to himself. He commended Zhao Hai for being tactful. He knew what Zhao Hai was getting at, Charlie smiled and responded, “A bit interested, how many blankets does mister have right now?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, “Counting both my blankets and carpets, there should be 10 thousand. This isn’t my max production, come spring they should increase.”

Charlie nodded, “Good, I’ll have those as well. Is mister okay with selling those in market price?”

Zhao Hai replied, “Of course. Next month when I deliver the fire fishes, I’ll have those blankets and carpets delivered as well. Is your highness satisfied with this?”

Charlie smiled, “Then we’re settled. And mister, if I may ask, what matter did you come to Rising Water City for? If you need any help, Aonas can lend you a hand.”

Aonas quickly added, “Yes, I could definitely provide mister with help inside Rising Water City. I have a bit of influence here.”

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “Nothing big, I just want to buy some things as well as try to open up a shop in this city.”

Upon hearing Zhao Hai, Charlie’s eyes lit up then he said, “How about mister open a shop at my Jade Water City? The goods and services in Jade Water City are about the same as Rising Water City. Additionally, I could give mister an exemption on taxes. What does mister think?”

Zhao Hai stared, he didn’t think that Charlie would be surprisingly enthusiastic. He knew that he might offend Charlie if he refuses. He didn’t know what kind of person Charlie was, if the prince was a petty person, he might retaliate in the future.

Also, if he agrees and opened up a shop in Jade Water City, he may suffer some problems if Charlie hates him in the future. It would be a risk to his people if he chooses this option.

Looking at Zhao Hai who stayed quiet, Charlie didn’t want to be misunderstood so he immediately added, “Mister, please don’t misunderstand, I don’t mean to force you. If mister wants to go then its good, but if he disagrees then that’s fine as well. This matter wouldn’t affect our cooperation.”

Zhao Hai looked at Charlie and smiled, “Your highness has also misunderstood, you have given me such a good benefits, so of course I’ll have to head towards Jade Water City. This time, I only came to Rising Water City because it was closer. Tomorrow I’ll head to Jade Water City, I wonder when your highness will return to Jade Water City?”

Charlie looked at Zhao Hai and said, “I also happen to return to

Jade Water City tomorrow. I wonder if mister can give this one a ride in your ship?”

Zhao Hai stared for a moment before he gave a smile and nodded, “Having your highness as my guest would certainly be an honor. Then we’re good, tomorrow me and my group will be waiting for your highness in my ship. Just head to the docks of the city and look for my ship. It’s named Haven.”

Charlie smiled, “Alright. Then I won’t be bothering mister anymore. Mister should rest when you head back. Tomorrow, we still need to leave the city unnoticed.”

Zhao Hai stood up while he gave a faint smile, “Then Zhao Hai will ask to be excused, your highness.” Then he bowed to Charlie before being led away from the living room by Liru.

Charlie also accompanied Zhao Hai to the entrance. Then left Liru to guide Zhao Hai to the carriage. Charlie then returned to the living room.

Aonas looked at Charlie and said, “Your Highness, why were you too polite to him? Also, why exempt him from tax? Is it because of the fire fish and milk wine?”

Charlie gave a smile and shook his head, “No, Aonas, you must understand. When I first heard about Zhao Hai, I didn’t think much of him. But after seeing him just now, I suddenly had the inkling to pull this person to my side. This is because this person is terrifying, not because of his schemes nor his temptations. Everything he does is all straightforward, you can clearly see what he is thinking about. This is why I value him too much, for him to refrain from using schemes means that he is confident in his own strength, he disdains beating around the bush. You can also see from his actions and expressions the look of sincerity, something that I rarely see in other people.”

Aonas looked at Charlie, still confused. Charlie smiled as he added, “There are all sorts of plots and schemes in this world that

it is very hard to see a sincere person. Why did I cooperate with him? This is because for people like Zhao Hai, if you are good to him and not betray him, he will never ever betray you for the sake of higher benefits.”

Aonas was still not convinced, he looked at Charlie and said, “How did your highness deduce this? How come I am unable to see it?”

Charlie gave a smile and said, “Remember when I offered him a partnership? Most people would immediately agree, after all, as a third prince I have a much higher position than either the Calci Family or the Shelley Family. But instead, he implicitly told me the shares of the two families as he revealed how much supply he can provide. This is a probe, he wanted to see my attitude towards this matter. If I wanted the shares of the two families, then he would definitely not cooperate with me. Aonas, you should know about the recent matter of the Calci Family, yes? That waste of a fifth child of the family had his eyes on Zhao Hai, and may have even suffered a loss in Zhao Hai’s hands. Despite this, Zhao Hai still didn’t give me the share of the Calci Family. This showed that he is a man of sentiment, if such a person were to join my side, then it would be a great boon for me.”

Aonas finally understood after hearing Charlie’s explanation, he gave a nod and said, “Your highness, when you invited him to Jade Water city, why did he seem to be hesitant?”

Charlie smiled and said, “This is another point that made me like him. Do you think that if he establishes a shop in Jade Water City, he will stay there for a long time? Of course not, he would send his people there. I gave him tax exemptions, average people will definitely agree, the reason why he hesitated was because if he does send his men to Jade Water City and we happen to fight in the future, he fears that I would act against his men. For someone who cares deeply about his own subordinates, that is a very desirable trait.”

Aonas looked at Charlie with an admiring look, “Your Highness, your eyes are really like blazing torches. But if Zhao Hai is really a person of sentiment, then why didn’t he give the Calci Family all of the shares? I remember that the Calci Family had helped him a lot.”

Charlie replied, “This is because he is cautious and wants to leave a leeway for himself. I think that Zhao Hai has a lot of subordinates that are counting on him for resources. If he gave all of his products to the Calci Family, he would certainly suffer big if the Family decides to stop cooperating with him. This is understandable, its basic human nature. I even believe that this overall supply of about 100 thousand fire fishes and 100 thousand jin of milk wine that he revealed isn’t his maximum supply. He will always give himself a way out.”

Aonas nodded, this point of having a back up plan is how things should be. Even he has prepared an escape route for himself, this isn’t a strange thing.

Charlie looked at Aonas and smiled faintly, “This Zhao Hai isn’t simple. Earlier, he had an enmity with Grand Duke Lionheart, but he still managed to be unscathed. Moreover, I heard that back in Aksu Empire, he had offended the Radiant Church as well as Southern King Boris, making him escape towards the Beastman Prairie. Then he used a false identity to escape to Rosen Empire. After which he lead the Empire’s anti-Radiant Church tide. He is too fierce, this is the most important point, he gave the Calci Family advice that would hit the Radiant Church in their most vital points. This made me decide to settle in recruiting him.”

Aonas frowned as he asked, “Your Highness, isn’t that idea from the Calci Family? What made you think that it was given by Zhao Hai?”

Charlie made a disdainful expression, “Hmph, if the Calci Family already had an idea that great, then they should have already used it a long time ago. They had been pressured by the Radiant Church

all these years, and the idea only came out just as Zhao Hai arrived at Sky Water City, isn't this too coincidental? Therefore, I judged that this should be Zhao Hai's doing. Those antiques back at the Calci Family, hehe, it would be impossible for them to come up with this idea. It was good that Smith and his brothers are really talented, and they had good eyes. It was only that fifth child Juwan that is a complete waste. If you have the chance, try getting Smith's favor, if we can get their support, then the throne wouldn't be able to escape my grasp, haha."

Aonas didn't expect that Charlie would have such high view of Smith. But he didn't get angry, he knew his capabilities, and he was also a merchant. When thinking about Charlie snatching the throne, these few tricks could also be considered good.

Charlie turned to Aonas, this man is very important to him. Aonas' capabilities were formidable, and is loyal to him. It was this point that made Aonas incomparable to the other people. Thinking about this, Charlie faintly smiled and said, "Aonas, go help me prepare to leave with Zhao Hai's ship tomorrow in returning to Jade Water City. The matters in Rising Water City will be handed over to you. Don't forget, you are now a merchant, except for extremely important matters, don't contact me. Just go and do you merchant duties."

Aonas nodded.

Chapter 395 – Buda Family's Opportunity to Recover

Zhao Hai returned to the hotel. After saying goodbye to Liru, he immediately found Ronaldo and told him that opening the store would have to wait.

Ronaldo knew that Zhao Hai had went out earlier, but he didn't know where he went. He also couldn't ask Zhao Hai, in any case he already got the family an additional 5,000 fire fishes per month. So he didn't probe further, he just accepted the decision fully.

Ronaldo had already been given orders by the family to not be greedy in cooperating with Zhao Hai. Otherwise, they would lose everything. This was the reason why Ronaldo didn't request anything from Zhao Hai and just helped him with everything. He believed that Zhao Hai wouldn't leave him unrewarded and sure enough, he was rewarded with an additional 5,000 fire fishes per month. Although not that much, the Shelley Family still regarded it as quite a bit of income.

And now that Zhao Hai wanted to leave, Ronaldo didn't stop him. He also didn't inquire Zhao Hai as to why. He knew that further inquiry would only make the other party dislike him.

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Zhao Hai entered the room and then reiterated what happened with Charlie to Laura and the others. Laura didn't oppose to the cooperation since she trusted the Space. If they have a falling out with Charlie in the future, they could just receive the staff and save them.

Seeing that Laura didn't oppose to the partnership, Zhao Hai sighed in relief. Truthfully, he still held Laura's opinion in high regards when it comes to business decisions. After all, Laura was a true Merchant in the past, this lovely girl's reputation even

reached Rosen Empire, she isn't playing around.

Zhao Hai looked at Laura and asked, "Why do you think Charlie wanted to go with us to Jade Water City? Is it to recruit me? I don't think that I have any worth for him to be considering me."

Laura gave a smile and said, "Who told you that you don't have any worth? You're very exceptional, it is normal for him to be pulling over to his side."

Zhao Hai just smiled faintly and said, "In any case, let's prepare ourselves. We'll be leaving Rising Water City tomorrow. Also, Charlie will be coming along with us for cover. I initially didn't want to involve myself in their matters since looking at Charlie's actions today, it seems like the battle for the throne is more intense than I thought. Taking part in their struggle isn't a good idea."

Laura forced a smile and said, "We're already involved ever since you met Charlie, it's too late to say anything at this point. From what I can see, we might as well lend Charlie a hand. Brother Hai, if we can help Charlie get the imperial throne, the Buda Family might see itself reemerging in the future."

Zhao Hai smiled bitterly, "I'm afraid that meeting him is the wrong decision. I'm also afraid that if we relocate the clan to Rosen Empire, the Aksu Empire would take away the Black Wasteland from us. In the end, that place is where we decided to take root."

Laura smiled and said, "You think too much, Elder Brother Hai. No matter who wanted to take the Black Wasteland away, they still need to deal with the poisonous fog. Nobody would dare settle there. Rest assured, that place will still be our roots. Also, nobody would think that we stayed there anyway, they might have already thought that we had escaped to the sea or something."

Zhao Hai forced a smile, he knew that what Laura said was the truth, there was nobody that would dare settle in the black wasteland aside from them. Zhao Hai thought for a moment and

said, “I think it would be better for us to discuss this matter with Grandpa Green.”

Laura agreed, “I think that’s a good idea. We should tell Grandpa Green about this, but I think he wouldn’t agree.”

Zhao Hai shook his head and said, “I don’t think so, Granpa Green would certainly agree, he wanted to revive the Buda Clan more than I do.”

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“Agree! Of course I agree. Young Master, what are you afraid of? As long as the Black Wasteland is in our hands, we will have a place to return to. If an accident happens outside, the Buda Clan could still return here.”

Green immediately expressed his thoughts when Zhao Hai told him about the matter. Green continued, “Young master, all great families must start from the bottom and build themselves bit by bit. In the past, the Buda Clan fell into this situation since we didn’t have the Space, it was impossible for us to retreat immediately back then. But young master, you currently have the Space, we don’t need to fear about anything, you should grasp this opportunity.”

Zhao Hai didn’t think that Green would say this, but seeing that Green agreed to his plan, Zhao Hai didn’t say anything and just nodded as he said, “Alright, when I get to the ship tomorrow, I’ll go and see Charlie’s attitude. If I like his bearing, then I’ll go help him.”

Green nodded, he looked at Zhao Hai with his eyes shining and said, “Young Master, tomorrow your poison will get cured. But what would happen in the ship?”

Zhao Hai smiles and said, “It doesn’t matter. When the time to detoxify comes tomorrow, I’ll just go to the Space, not a huge trouble.”

Green nodded, “You should be careful with the procedure. This is too important for us, as well as to the future of the Buda Clan.”

Zhao Hai faintly smiled and said, “Grandpa Green, rest assured, there will be no problems. The Space has never failed me before, there’s no reason for it to fail this time.” Green nodded.

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Next morning, Zhao Hai and the others went out of the hotel early. Then they headed straight to the Haven. The Haven was just moored to the dock without interference. It looks like the fee that they paid was quite worth it.

Zhao Hai paid the supervisor before boarding the boat and wait for Charlie. When they docked the ship here, they already paid, now that the wanted to depart, they need to pay again, this dock is really too black hearted.

However, Zhao Hai didn’t care, it was just a small charge. Currently, he wanted to know when Charlie would arrive. And just as he was thinking about this, a very ordinary carriage arrived and went right beside the Haven, then Liru came out of it.

When Zhao Hai saw this, he immediately gave the command to bring the carriage straight into the ship. Liru drove the carriage to the ship then Zhao Hai immediately set sail.

Only after they left the dock and entered the sea did Charlie get out of the carriage and smiled to Zhao Hai as he said, “I don’t have any choice in my actions this time, I hope mister can forgive me.”

Zhao Hai smiles and replied, “Not a problem. Your Highness, please.” Then he led Charlie to the cabin. After the Haven got modified, the cabin of the Haven wasn’t like those on the other ships anymore. Installed inside was a living room as well as a dining room.

When Charlie saw this part of the ship, he was startled, he didn’t think that such a scene was possible inside a ship. When he sat

down, Meg immediately gave him a cup of tea. After drinking a mouthful, he smiled and said, “Mister’s ship is very nice. I have been on many ships before, it was only this time that I felt very comfortable.”

Zhao Hai replied as he gave a smile, “Your Highness praises too much. The ship was only modified like this because I have some undead crew on board. They don’t need to rest so there’s no need to have cabins for their use. With that, I had so much free space.”

Charlie stared blankly, he didn’t notice that those crew were unexpectedly undead. After hearing Zhao Hai, he couldn’t help but be surprised and asked, “It seems like Mister’s Dark Magic has reached a high level. I actually thought that the crew on board were ordinary people.”

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “The undead on the ship are previously the original crew of the ship. In fact, I only had this ship recently, back when Grand Duke Lionheart was still alive. It was because of him that I had acquired this ship.”

Charlie was puzzled, he asked, “Grand Duke Lionheart? But why do I see that this ship seems to have the workmanship of the Ocean Waves Dynasty? Did Lionheart have some relation to the dynasty?”

Zhao Hai smiled, “A little bit. When Lionheart ran away from his territory, he wanted to board this ship to run away. In the end, I caught up to him and he couldn’t escape anymore. I killed him and his group, naturally, the ship was turned over to me.”

Charlie’s eyes flashed, “Grand Duke’s demise was because of you? I thought that the Calci Family were the ones responsible for his execution. As it turns out, it was actually mister. May I know what rank Mister is right now?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, “8th rank. I’m just an 8th rank Mage, hehe, I hope that your highness wouldn’t laugh at me.”

Charlie actually laughed, “Mister is too polite. I think that the continent hasn’t heard of a person as young as mister that has reached 8th rank before. Mister really brings a lot of surprises.”

Zhao Hai replied, “I’m not counting on that. At least I know of some people in the Radiant Church who had reached that level who aren’t older than me.”

Charlie stared blankly, this was the first time that he had heard of this matter. He couldn’t help but change his expression as he asked, “Can mister tell me about it in detail? Mister should know that because of the current matter, my Rosen Empire and the Radiant Church is not very happy with each other. I’m afraid that something will happen soon.”

Zhao Hai smiled and said, “Your highness should have heard that I came from Aksu Empire. When I offended the Radiant Church and was forced to run to the Beastman Prairie. I didn’t expect that the Radiant Church would send someone to hunt me down, and it was surprisingly a 9th rank expert. Fortunately for me, they violated a beastman taboo, so the 9th rank was killed by another 9th rank beastman. After he died, I turned him into an Advanced Level Undead. From his own mouth, I heard of a thing called the Ultimate Weapon plan that the Radiant Church had been operating these past years.”

Charlie sternly listened to Zhao Hai’s words. Upon hearing Zhao Hai mention the Ultimate Weapon plan, his expression changed. He looked straight at Zhao Hai and said, “Ultimate Weapon Plan?”

Zhao Hai nodded, “Right, the Ultimate Weapon plan. This plan selects innately talented children from the entire continent. They train these children as well as had the church’s potion masters and artisans experiment on them. They plan to develop way to mass produce 9th rank experts. Those who failed would be at least 7th or 8th rank. Majority of those who failed would end up as crippled, some would even die from the process.”

Charlie's expression continued to worsen, he asked further, "Mister, are you really talking about the Radiant Church? Haven't they always said that they are the servants of the Radiant God and thus would save people? Why would they do such a thing?"

Zhao Hai gave a bitter smile and answered, "This is only a pretense that they use. The talk about being the servant of the Radiant God and saving people is all nonsense. The bad things that they did are no less than what the Dark Mages did. I'll be open to your highness, a lot of those notorious Dark Mages in the continent are all cultivated by the Radiant Church. They trained those Dark Mages and made them go out into the continent and perform heinous acts to dirty and corrupt the reputation of the other Dark Mages. With this, not only did they make the populace hate the Dark Mages, they also slowly reduced their numbers, and hoping to eventually reach their goal of fully exterminating them."

Charlie's eyes couldn't help but shrink, he asked with a deep voice, "Are mister's words serious?"

Zhao Hai nodded, "No statement from them is true. Your highness, do you know why I left the prairie and went straight to Rosen Empire?"

Charlie replied, "Isn't it because of the Calci Family?"

Zhao Hai faintly smiled and said, "That is one reason, the other reason is because compared to all the nations in the continent, the influence of the Radiant Church on the Rosen Empire is the weakest. Rosen Empire is the most powerful nation in the continent, their own nobles had their own pride, therefore there would only be a few of them that would join the Radiant Church. Not like other nations where their highest officials are all members of the Radiant Church. Southern King of Aksu Empire is one of the members of the Church's Knight's Congregation. He held a high status in the church and thus in other nations. It was because of this that I came to Rosen Empire."

Charlie stood up and paced around the room as he muttered, “How could this be? This way, the Church would control the entire continent sooner or later. What fierce move by the Radiant Church.”

The empire’s anti-Radiant Church movement wasn’t taken seriously by Charlie previously. In his view, the Radiant Church can only do so much inside Rosen Empire. But now, it seems like it was a completely different matter. Luckily, they had been suppressing the Church. This thought brought a cold sweat to Charlie’s back.

Although it can be said that the empire had been suppressing the Church for many years, they didn’t investigate them thoroughly. They were so sure that the church wouldn’t be a threat. Charlie never imagined that the church had this hidden agenda going on.

After walking a few more paces, Charlie turned his head to Zhao Hai, “Mister, who else knows of this information?”

Zhao Hai gave a smile, “Your Highness, who do you think hates the Church the most inside the Rosen Empire ? Of course it is the Calci Family. Some of these matters were only known to them quite recently, but some was already known by the family for a long time.”

Chapter 396 – Business

Charlie looked at Zhao Hai, he knew that Zhao Hai should have just acquired this information recently. He stared and asked, “Why are you telling me this?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and replied, “I have an enmity with the Radiant Church, they wanted me gone as soon as possible. In order to preserve my life, I have to pull more people into going against the Church. I’m telling these information to your highness in the hopes that you would also help me deal with the church.”

Charlie stared at Zhao Hai for a moment, then he gave a laugh and said, “Alright, haha, no big deal. Mister can rest assured, if the church is really as overbearing as what you just described, then it is naturally my duty to deal with them. But mister should know that I’m just a prince, the things that I can do are quite limited.”

Zhao Hai looked at Charlie while Charlie also looked at him, Zhao Hai showed a faint smile and said, “Your highness, if you need my abilities, I’ll try my best to help.”

When two wise people talk to each other, less words were required to convey a message. Charlie knew what Zhao Hai meant, he looked at Zhao Hai and said, “Charlie thanks mister. Mister, you should know that I need quite a bit of money right now. Do you have any business opportunities that you could provide me?”

Zhao Hai laughed and said, “Your highness is too polite. Haha, but I like your personality, direct and with no false pretenses. What business does your highness want? I’m thinking about cooperating on Merfolk products such as magic beasts, pearls and so on. What do you think about this?”

Charlie stared blankly before his eyes lit up. One could even see his eyes turn into gold coins. Nobody could blame him, merfolk products are too valuable in the continent.

The continent is very big, making its coastline quite long. However, one could easily forget that there were mages who could use their spells to harvest these marine products by the tons. This made these products as cheap as the price of cabbage.

But as time passed, those marine resources were all overfished to depletion. The only place that they were available belonged to the sea-dwellers, and humans wouldn't dare to approach that part of the sea. Since nobody wanted to go, the scarcity of these marine products made their prices skyrocket. Presently, there were almost no cities in the continent that had a market for these products, people were too reluctant to sell their share.

Now that he heard Zhao Hai propose a partnership regarding these products, Charlie immediately understood the amount of wealth involved. But he quickly sobered up, he looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Mister, these merfolk are not fond of playing jokes, you say you got it from the deep seas? You'll scour them yourself? Sir, doing that isn't wise, if you anger those merfolk, huge troubles will arise."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "It'll be alright, be relieved, all of these are legit. You forgot that I'm a Dark Mage. Since my crew didn't need to eat food, my food stockpile could last me for about a year and a half. In that time I can go to the deep seas and make my undead dive down for those resources. There's no need for me to find them myself."

When heard Zhao Hai, Charlie didn't add more. In the past, those who were willing to scour the coastline for marine products were those weak mages or apprentices. Since they couldn't do anything great with their magic, they would just go to the sea and make some money.

But for truly strong mages, they didn't stoop so low. These mages were already invited by nobles to sponsor them.

Also, those weak mages would only get cheap products from the

sea that weren't that valuable, so they generally won't go into the deep sea, their ships also couldn't go there. After all, they could still earn some change with the fishes in the coastlines.

After a brief pause, Charlie opened his mouth, "Very well, I can cooperate with mister in this venture. How do you want our cooperation to be? Will you sell me the products? Or would we distribute them together? I think it's better if you give me your supply while I sell it, then we divide the profits. What do you think?"

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "Alright, let's go with the latter, I'll give you my supply then you sell it. How do we divide the profits, half?"

Charlie replied, "I thinks that's no good. You are the one who got them, doing all the hard work. Me having half the profits wouldn't be appropriate."

Zhao Hai gave a faint smile and said, "It doesn't matter, then we're all set. Also, you highness, I wouldn't be able to give you a lot of fire fishes, otherwise their value in the continent would drop. I suggest that you place this business on other people's hands, I have a good deal for you in return."

Charlie asked, "Other business? What?"

Zhao Hai smiled, "Right now I have a lot of grains and vegetables on hand. If you want these, I can supply you. Of course, I'll sell it in market price, and I swear that their quality is the highest in the continent."

Charlie couldn't help but smile faintly, "Mister, my business is mostly wholesale selling. Good quality wouldn't make any difference, if I add my markup price, those merchants wouldn't purchase it."

Zhao Hai slapped his head, he actually forgot that the reputation of his high quality goods could only be used in Purcell Duchy. For

the other people in the continent, they might not have heard of his Haven products. If he wanted to use his brand in Rosen Empire, it obviously wouldn't work.

Zhao Hai could only smile bitterly and say, "Your highness, how about we brand my products with my Haven trademark? This way, the populace would know about my products."

Charlie nodded, "I heard about mister's Haven products when you are still in Purcell Duchy. If we start making the brand known, it would be good for both of us."

Zhao Hai agreed, "Then I have no other good business at the moment. Although I have some rations, they are low-end products. They wouldn't be able to make much money."

Charlie smiled and said, "That's fine. I heard that rations are quite popular with the mercenaries. How about giving me some?"

Zhao Hai looked at Charlie. Seeing the enthusiastic man in front of him, Zhao Hai could only give a forced smile and said, "Your Highness, you've got to be kidding. Rations are very easily produced, soon the continent would have loads of suppliers, we wouldn't be able to make much profits in them. You won't be able to have good benefits. Don't worry, I won't hide from you the fact that I'm currently developing a new type of liquor. If the development succeeds, then it will definitely be huge, all hotels in the continent would have it. The price isn't very expensive, it is also very suitable for everyone. When that time comes, I'll have this as an exclusive business with you, what do you think?"

Charlie's eyes widened as he said, "Really? You have this kind of liquor?"

Zhao Hai smiles, "Of course I do. This liquor is just as fragrant as Milk Wine, but has a higher yield; this makes it quite cheap. If we make this, it would certainly be popular. Laura, please get a glass of beer for his highness."

Laura calmly nodded as she prepared a glass of beer for Charlie. Charlie looked at the glass in front of him, the color was so bizarre that he had the thought of not drinking it. But to show that he trusts Zhao Hai, he could only lift the glass and took a sip with his eyes closed.

When the beer reached his mouth, Charlie felt a strange sour taste. He didn't want to swallow it, but for the sake of politeness, he gulped the liquid down.

After the beer was drank, Charlie noticed a strange smell. The smell was quite peculiar, it wasn't a good smell, but it definitely made you want to take a second drink.

Without thinking about it, Charlie took another sip, then the smell came again. Charlie could only stop himself as he placed the glass down and said, "It really has a special taste, but I'm afraid that common people wouldn't like it."

Zhao Hai only smiles and said, "This is because it is still in development, the acidic flavor is still there. Upon completion, that flavor would not be there anymore."

When Charlie heard Zhao Hai's assurance, he became more interested, "If that is so, then this business would definitely be very good. But I seem to feel that this liquor wouldn't survive long times in storage."

Zhao Hai shook his head, "Your majesty is half wrong. Preserving this liquor is both easy and difficult. If this is stored in a tightly sealed container, then it could be preserved for a long time. If the seal is faulty, then the flavor wouldn't be good."

Charlie nodded, "So that's how it is. Then that's good. Sealing a container isn't a difficult thing. Then I will be anticipating mister's good news."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "Alright, if the research succeeds, I will immediately supply you."

Charlie smiled, “I’ll have to thank mister for today. All these money making businesses will be very helpful to me.”

Zhao Hai gave a slight chuckle and said, “It’s no big deal, after all, I still have to sell them somewhere right? Haha.”

Charlie returned the smile and said, “No matter what, mister has my gratitude.”

Zhao Hai laughed as he said, “I could also supply your highness with some bulls and argali, but those still have to wait until spring.”

Charlie smiled, “Good. Although bulls and argali aren’t in very high demand, their sales are still very good. As long as we have supply, we won’t worry about selling them.”

Zhao Hai nodded, “These businesses are enough for some people to be green with envy. I advise your highness to be careful. Make sure that people wouldn’t group up against you, or else you’ll going to be in deep trouble.”

Charlie frowned, but he couldn’t help but agree to Zhao Hai’s suggestion. That situation can be very easily reached. .

Chapter 397 – Second Prince

What Zhao Hai said was true, all of those businesses that he proposed were indeed subject to envy. At present, all of the candidates for the throne had the same strengths and position. Nobody was particularly superior to the others. But if Charlie were to start these businesses, his position would certainly surpass his other brothers. This may force the others to group up to keep him in check, it would be troublesome.

However, Zhao Hai's businesses were really lucrative. Letting these benefits go would truly be a waste, this placed Charlie in a dilemma.

Zhao Hai looked at Charlie and smiled, "Your highness doesn't need to think about it too much. In the end, the final result isn't up to you, you should just go about your own matters."

Charlie nodded then sighed, he understood what Zhao Hai meant. The outcome of the struggle for the throne was indeed not up to the candidates. His father was still not old, he could still continue to become emperor for 20 years. In 20 years, nobody can really know what will happen, so there's no particular forecast that can be made.

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "Your highness, when we reach Jade Water City, I might need your help in opening my shop."

Charlie smiled, "Mister can rest assured, I got you covered."

As he said this, an alarm could be heard outside. Zhao Hai turned his head to his side as Shun immediately ran out.

Charlie just calmly sat there. After a short while Shun came back and reported, "Young Master, there are several ships from the harbor approaching us. They look to be pursuing our ship, possibly wanting to surround it."

Zhao Hai nodded, "So the alarm was for us. Let's go see who it

is.”

After he stood up, Charlie followed suit and also stood up. Zhao hai turned his head and said, “Your Highness, you should stay in the cabin this time. This may not be necessarily because of you. You will get exposed if you show yourself.”

Charlie nodded as he sat back down. Then Zhao Hai led Laura and the others outside, leaving Charlie behind.

Liru frowned and asked, “Your Highness, do you think we’re in danger?”

Charlie shook his head, “I’m not sure, we could only know later. I believe that mister’s strength is enough to ensure our safety.”

Although Liru was worried, he didn’t talk anymore and just nodded. He didn’t know that because of the upgrades in the Space, a lot of Zhao Hai’s undead already had the strength of 8th rank. Also, Zhao Hai still had Cai’er and Zhao Wen. With all of these added together, there weren’t a lot of people that could deal with Zhao Hai in this world.

When Zhao Hai came out of the living room, he calmly stared at the ships that had encircled the Haven. The ships weren’t battleships, just five-masted ironclad cargo ships, like Zhao Hai’s Haven. For someone to be able to mobilize this number of ships made Zhao Hai quite surprised.

However, Zhao Hai wasn’t afraid, even if these ships were armed, they were useless. Zhao Hai’s undead had already reached 8th rank because of the Space, with these undead on hand, Zhao Hai could even destroy a small kingdom, not to say these ships.

Zhao Hai didn’t move, he waited the other party to approach him. He just stood calmly as he had the Haven’s sails taken down.

Before long, the closest ship in the encirclement went towards the Haven. Zhao Hai observed the vessel. On its deck were a group of people, the most noticeable person was 30-year old man with a

face closely resembling Charlie. Their figures were very similar with each other, he had ordinary clothes on but feels very different when he wore it. And most importantly, the commanding aura that this person had wasn't any less than Charlie's.

Upon seeing this person, Zhao Hai knew that the man didn't come for them, but instead for Charlie. This man was possibly Charlie's second brother, the Rosen Empire's Second Prince.

Zhao Hai took a deep breath and bowed towards the man who he suspected to be the second prince, "May I know who mister is? Why did you surround my ship? Didn't you know that this is Rosen Empire's waters?"

The supposedly second prince revealed a curious look when he heard Zhao Hai, after some time, he replied, "Are you Zhao Hai? You're quite brave, nobody asks me for explanations while inside Rosen Empire. But feel relieved, I did not come for you today."

When Zhao Hai heard the other party's words, his suspicions were confirmed. He couldn't help but smile faintly and say, "I really don't know why I need to be relieved, I'm just an ordinary merchant doing proper business. I didn't skip on taxes, nor have I become a spy, I didn't kill people and burn places. I really don't understand what merits me to be afraid."

The Second Prince looked at Zhao Hai's eyes and said seriously, "Boy, I'm not here to find you today. Go and make Little Three come out immediately. He came to my Rising Water city without meeting me, isn't he being impolite?"

Just as Zhao Hai was about to reply, Charlie walked out from the ship. He showed a faint smile and bowed, "I've seen second brother, I just went for a short visit in the city. I didn't want to disturb you."

The Second Prince looked at Charlie and laughed, "Is it really just a short visit and nothing else? Then why did mister Zhao Hai immediately leave Rising Water City and head towards Jade Water

City?”

Charlie gave a smile and said, “I just unintentionally met mister Zhao Hai and invited him to do business in my Jade Water City. For convenience, I rode on his ship. What’s wrong about that? Is it worth second brother dragging all of these people here?”

The Second Prince coldy snorted and retorted, “Little Three, your words are useless. Without even looking into mister Zhao Hai, I could tell at a glance that you just took him from me. This seems very insincere.”

Upon hearing this, Zhao Hai couldn’t help but force a smile and said, “Mister should be the Second Prince right? Your highness, I am a merchant, and isn’t it up to me where I do my business? By your words, it seems like if I go to Rising Water city, then I am obligated to do business there, and not head to other places. With this logic, since I came to Sky Water City first, then should I do business there forever? Where did the second prince get the fact that I was stolen?”

The Second Prince looked at Zhao Hai, “Zhao Hai, there’s no use to keep speaking. Behave yourself and stay in Rising Water City, I promise to not take action then. Otherwise, you wouldn’t be able to do business in the Rosen Empire anymore, believe me.”

Zhao Hai just smiled slightly and replied, “i don’t believe you.” Very simple words, but they made the Second Highness’ heart explode with rage, he looked at Zhao Hai with a reddened face.

Charlie didn’t think that Zhao Hai would actually go against the second prince, this moved him a bit. At the same time, he was scared. He knew that he wanted to get Zhao Hai’s support, he didn’t want him to suffer an accident.

Charlie immediately inserted, “Second Brother, speak straight, why did you come today? This matter had nothing to do with Zhao Hai, what do you really want from me?”

The Second Prince coldly replied, “Little Three, don’t be too complacent, I know that you’re the favorite. I won’t touch you, since if you let father know, I’m finished. But no matter what, Zhao Hai must go back to Rising Water City with me.”

Charlie replied, “Impossible. I don’t have a deep influence on mister Zhao Hai. Going with me is his own decision, I didn’t pressure him.”

The Second Prince snorted, “Hmph, if you’re not pressuring Zhao Hai, then why are you riding his ship towards Jade Water City? Why did he leave Rising Water City when he had just arrived there? Who doesn’t know that he just had a falling out with the Calci Family. This time, when he came to Rising Water City, it was definitely to establish business. But now you’re pulling him towards Jade Water City, who wouldn’t see that you’re in the wrong?”

Charlie just showed a faint smile, “There are a lot of people doing business between Rising Water City and Jade Water City. Can’t you think that this is the situation this time, second brother? Also, you’re talking about being wrong? I don’t know why Mister Zhao Hai wanted to leave Rising Water City, but you stopping him is something that you shouldn’t be doing.”

The Second Prince looked at Zhao Hai and said, “Zhao Hai, do you really want to side with Little Three?”

Zhao Hai looked at the Second Prince and smiled, “Your highness, I’m just a merchant. Chasing benefits is my job. When I looked at Rising Water City’s atmosphere, I decided that it isn’t suitable for my business, therefore I want to head towards Jade Water City to take a look. Why am I unable to do this? Also, what’s wrong with the Third Prince riding my ship?”

The Second Prince clenched his teeth when he heard Zhao Hai, “Good, Zhao Hai, good. You actually said that my Rising Water City isn’t suitable for business? What benefits did Little Three give

you? I can give you the same conditions.”

Zhao Hai couldn't help but shake his head secretly, the second prince is much worse than Charlie. He just knew about Charlie when he embarked on the ship, only then did he give chase. This meant that he wasn't Charlie's match, such person wasn't an opponent for Charlie.

Zhao Hai bowed to the Second Prince and said, “Your Highness Second Prince, I just want to look at Jade Water City. Just like you said, me and the Calci Family currently have problems with each other. Thus, I want to choose another place to do business. However, I have not been to both Rising Water City and Jade Water City. This time, I only came to Rising Water City because it was the closest location, I didn't intend to do business there. There was no need for the Second Highness so amass such show of force.”

The Second Prince looked at Zhao Hai while having a pale expression. “Good, good. I'll let you go Zhao Hai. But just know who's territory Rosen Empire belongs to.” Then he waved his hand as he departed to his ship.

Seeing the Second Prince leave, Zhao Hai gave a sigh. He was utterly disappointed with the Second Prince.

Chapter 398 – Attitude

After Zhao Hai and Charlie returned to the ship's living room, Charlie smiled apologetically to Zhao Hai, "Mister, what you just did placed you on the opposite side of my second brother. Second brother isn't that broad minded, you need to watch out in the future."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "This is how people are. Some of them you become friends with, while some become your enemies. A truly friendly person only exists in stories."

Hearing Zhao Hai, Charlie understood that Zhao Hai was showing his faith on him. Although Zhao Hai promised to help him, he wouldn't be the same as his other people. Zhao Hai wants to have a degree of freedom in his actions as well as weight to his words. He wanted to be treated like equals.

Charlie also knew that people with Zhao Hai's capabilities have their own pride. They will not accept being slaves that will be on other people's beck and call. It was precisely because of this that Zhao Hai said those words.

Charlie nodded, "Mister can feel relieved. I will guarantee mister's safety. My second brother has underestimated by strength, mister can rest assured."

Zhao Hai smiled and said, "I'm not that worried, to be honest. With the second prince's current strength, he wouldn't be able to do anything that could harm me. Your highness need not worry himself over my well-being

Upon hearing Zhao Hai, Charlie couldn't help but knit his brows, "Mister, you need to be careful in not underestimating my second brother too much. The cards on his hand aren't weak, he isn't any weaker than Grand Duke Lionheart."

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile and said, "It doesn't matter. As

long as he doesn't send a 9th rank expert to deal with me, then there's no problem. Your highness shouldn't worry."

When Charlie heard Zhao Hai, he nodded. In truth, it wasn't easy to request something from a 9th rank expert. When Grand Duke Lionheart was being hunted, the Calci and Shelley Families sent four 9th rank experts to kill Lionheart's two 9th rank experts. Naturally, the two families paid a huge price.

Seeing Zhao Hai's confidence, Charlie didn't say anything more, he could see Zhao Hai's strength with this point. Actually, by looking at the undead on the ship, Charlie wanted to gauge Zhao Hai's strength. Unfortunately, the undead didn't have any chance to exhibit their capabilities. But judging by their outer appearance, Charlie decided to not underestimate Zhao Hai.

Looking at the skies, it seems like lunchtime has arrived, so Zhao Hai invited Charlie to the dining area for a meal. Naturally, what they ate were nice meals; beef, mutton, fire fishes and various vegetables.

Charlie looked at the table and saw some dishes that he hadn't eaten before, this made him curious. Rosen Empire was the largest nation in the continent, so there were a lot of dishes that was served at the capital. But now, seeing that there were unique dishes in front of him, it touched the third prince's curiosity.

Of course, there were also fruit wine and milk wine served. On the other hand, the staple food was replaced with bread fruit. Zhao Hai wanted Charlie to taste food he hadn't tasted before.

Charlie was very curious of the bread fruit. When he started eating the delicacies, he was very startled since they were actually quite delicious.

It was especially so for the bread fruit. Charlie saw that this was from a fruit tree, but for the specific tree, Charlie didn't know.

After eating some fruit, Charlie placed it down and looked at

Zhao Hai, “Mister, what is this fruit? Why does it change like this?”

Zhao Hai smiled, “This thing is called a Bread Fruit, I named it myself, hehe. Currently, only I have these on hand. However, I don’t have enough output for now so I cannot sell these wholesale. What is more important about the fruit is that it is the main component for the beer that I am fermenting. This is also the reason why I am not preparing to push this product on the continent.”

Charlie didn’t expect that the bread fruit was actually a component for brewing beer. He nodded and said, “It really can’t be sold, it would be more valuable if made into beer.”

Zhao Hai faintly smiled, “Actually, the tree’s yield is very high, not slightly inferior to bamboo rice. But the tree is very demanding in regards to climate. It couldn’t just be grown anywhere, this makes its output very hard to increase.”

Charlie gave a nod then frowned, “Mister, wouldn’t this affect the beer’s output?”

Zhao Hai shook his head and replied, “It shouldn’t. I’m also researching about alternative materials to replace the bread fruit. And if we manage to do so, the bread fruit wouldn’t be wasted, we could just sell it since it is also quite a good product.”

Charlie nodded, “Truly a pity, this thing would be a fantastic thing to be made into army provisions. Not only could it increase the marching pace, it also tastes good.”

Zhai Hai smiled but didn’t agree, people’s mindsets are truly quite different. He didn’t think of using the bread fruit as army provision, and thinking of its advantages to the army, but Charlie did.

After finishing their lunch, Zhao Hai returned to his own room. Naturally, he gave Charlie a good room, one of the best rooms in

the ship.

Upon entering his room, Zhao Hai immediately returned to the Space and went to the Processing Factory. He surveyed the situation and felt good, in a dozen or so hours, the Detoxification potion would finally be done.

Zhao Hai sat in the villa's living room with Laura and the others by his side. When Zhao Hai took a sip from his cup of tea, Laura looked at him and said, "Brother Hai, we have already sided ourselves with Charlie, wouldn't he be angry with your actions today?"

Zhao Hai smiled faintly and said, "I just did that to judge his attitude. I want to see what would make him angry. If he became angry because of my intentions, then it meant that he isn't that broad minded. Even if I volunteered to help him, I would only do so sparingly. But if he was fine by it, then I'll fully support him in ascending the throne.

Zhao Hai placed his teacup and sighed, "A superior person who isn't broad-minded is no good, this also applies for those who always strive for control. I could only gauge him because of this."

Laura nodded and didn't say anything. What Zhao Hai said was reasonable, if Charlie as a higher up didn't have a broad mind, like the Second Prince, then supporting him was not a good idea.

At this time, Meg stared towards the Processing Factory and sighed, "It is too slow, still more than 10 hours left. Why does time seem to flow too slowly, a minute feels like 10 years."

Zhao Hai can only smile faintly as he said, "You're over exaggerating, it's fine. We have the afternoon, then dinner, then sleep. After waking up, the potion should be ready."

Meg pouted her mouth, "That's easy to say. Young master, go look at what the third prince is talking about." Zhao Hai smiled and opened the monitor. The screen immediately turned to the

Third Prince's room. Charlie was sitting inside while drinking, Liru was beside him.

Charlie looked somewhat thirsty, at the same time, he relaxed himself. He didn't think that the Second Prince would be alerted to his presence in Rising Water City. This was not good news for him.

Looking at Charlie's appearance, Liru knew what he was thinking, he couldn't help but whispered, "Your highness, now that the Second Prince has found out about us, we should inform Aonas, he may be in a dangerous situation."

Charlie placed his cup down and shook his head, "No, this time we went to the city to do about ten actions. Second brother shouldn't have known about Aonas."

Liru nodded then looked at Charlie, "Your Highness, wasn't Zhao Hai being too unreasonable today? He clearly expressed his intent to side with you, but his tone seems to be negotiating. He didn't put himself into a subordinate's position, it seems like he sees himself as your partner."

At this point, Charlie showed a faint smile, "Isn't this quite good? Liru, remember that people with ability would certainly hold a degree of pride. I couldn't do anything to mister Zhao hai's arrogance, he didn't need me to survive in the first place. Although he is currently in a sort of conflict with the Calci Family, I am quite sure that they wouldn't let go of him. the benefits that Zhao Hai brings are certainly too good. Also, even if he loses the Calci Family's backing, the Shelley Family is still extremely friendly with him. With such a continent spanning family in good relationship with him, why would Zhao Hai care about a nation's prince like me?"

Liru thought for a moment and had to agree with Charlie. The Shelley Family was a powerhouse whose influence has reached the entire continent. The family was quite formidable. If Zhao Hai maintains his friendly ties with the Shelley Family, even if he were

to be ousted from the Rosen Empire, he wouldn't worry about surviving on other nations. So long as he has the Shelley family on his back, he wouldn't have any problems.

No matter how powerful the Radiant Church was, it would be impossible for them to exterminate all Dark Mages. Additionally, they were currently going after famous and notorious Dark Mages, they didn't have the time to deal with the mysterious Zhao Hai.

Charlie breathed out a sigh and leaned his body on the chair. "Having Zhao Hai help me should be the most correct decision I could make. Have you seen second brother's attitude? This meant that he has some people supporting his back. Poor brother, why couldn't you realize that father is still very much alive and kicking? You will only get farther and farther away from the throne."

After he said that, he slowly closed his eyes. Before long, a windy sound could be heard, Charlie surprisingly fell asleep. Liru immediately placed a blanket over the third prince's body.

After Zhao Hai saw the scene, he immediately turned off the monitor. He took a deep breath and turned to Laura, "I didn't think that Charlie would have such high view of me. But Laura, why did he say that that if the second prince had a faction behind him, the emperor would see him as a threat? Aren't they father and son?"

Laura gave a stiff smile and said, "So what if they are father and son? Fathers and sons killing each other is very common in royal clans. Not to mention royal clans, even noble houses have these situations happening all the time. People would go crazy for a high position. Even if the Rosen Emperor is a father, he wouldn't forgive those who threaten his position, no matter they be his brothers or sons, all of them would be dealt with."

Zhao Hai sighed, then nodded, "It really is very stressful when one is a ruler. I believe that there are a lot of monarchs that hadn't

left their castle for their entire life. Their subordinates would just report about the happenings outside, not requiring them to check for it themselves. Who would've expected that the most pitiable people in the continent were actually the rulers?"

Laura smiled and said, "If others were to hear you, they would die laughing. Even if the king couldn't go out of his palace, don't forget that the entire kingdom belongs to him. Every single life inside it is in his hands. He gives life as well as takes it. Having the authority over a person's life would make anyone intoxicated. Otherwise, why do you think a lot of people wanted to be a monarch?"

Zhao hai chuckled and said, "Who knows? I don't want to be like that anyway. I want my future situation to be just like now, free to walk around and wander about. We can just drink wine and sit while chatting. Isn't this a better situation?"

Laura smiles, "Only you would think about this kind of life. There are a lot of people in the continent that don't want that. But, this is also good, I used to be busy with my business everyday in the past, but now, I didn't need to worry about a lot of things."

Zhao Hai gave a forced smile and replied, "That may not be true for long, we already strive to have our own kingdom. My head couldn't help but ache when thinking about the day that will be realized. Sigh. Anyway, Laura, when can your subordinates gather so that we could fetch them?"

Laura thought for moment then said, "I have given them ten days to prepare. This time, I had almost all of them come. Some are very far while some are just nearby, they still need some time to gather. Right, how is Uncle Evan doing?"

Zhao Hai shook his head and said, "He told me that he didn't want those people to leave. But he is still the Purcell Family's Patriarch, he needed to take the family into account. Thus, he had no choice but call the elder's assembly, and they agreed on letting

your people go. I reckon Uncle Evan isn't very happy right now."

Laura could only smile, "Of course he is not happy, Uncle Evan's temperament is just like a warrior. He wanted to place loyalty first, but he is currently shackled by the family's interests which completely contradicts his character. It would be strange if he would be happy. On the other hand, when will he take Ruyen away?"

Zhao Hai forced a smile, "Ruyen is already on a ship. I really find Ruyen's situation quite funny. Back when I was Adam, she ruthlessly wanted to end her engagement with me. Now that I'm Zhao Hai, she did her best to avoid me. It really is interesting."

Chapter 399 – Waiting

Upon listening to Zhao Hai, Laura and the others laughed. They knew that Zhao Hai was just talking casually and didn't express that he had any interest in Ruyen. Just like what Zhao Hai told them before, Ruyen wasn't worth Zhao Hai's attention.

However, Laura asked, "Who did Uncle Evan send to get her? We still need to take care of her well-being, she should arrive in perfect condition. If anything happens to her, it wouldn't be good for us."

Zhao Hai nodded and said, "It'll be fine. I will send some Blood Hawks to follow her. If there's anything wrong, we can immediately help."

Laura smiled, "I think there's no need for Elder Brother Hai to go, we can just send the Swordfish. Swordfish ships were even used to escort the emperor, I think there won't be any problems with it. This way we can sort of help with their situation. Having blood hawks carry your ghost staff around is very inconvenient for us. What do you think?"

Zhao Hai agreed, "This is a good idea. We have a lot of ships in our hands, and some of them would be rarely used. It should be a good idea to use them this time around."

Laura smiled and said, "If you send that many ships, the Aksu Empire would get nervous. They might think that a princess from Rosen Empire had come to visit Aksu Empire."

Zhao Hai couldn't help but laugh, they couldn't blame him. Currently, he has 11 three-masted ships and 4 five-masted ships on hand. This number is too astonishing.

Although the three-masted battleships were only the most common type, they were still battleships. Also, the five-masted ironclad merchant ships aren't easily bought and used by just anyone.

The cost of iron armor is too high, moreover they needed to be serviced every year. It was the same scenario if they underwent a battle, they would have to be serviced again. Because of this, no average person can take care of these ironclad ships. Even if you didn't use your ship, the maintenance cost of the ship was still very high.

Therefore, most five-masted ironclad ships are in the possessions of Great Families. Even Zhao Hai's Haven ship once belonged to a Great Family in Ocean Waves Dynasty before it changed hands.

If he sent all these ships to escort Ruyen, the Aksu Empire would certainly think that a princess had just come for a visit, and this is not an exaggeration.

After speaking of this, Zhao Hai immediately called over a blood hawk and released it to find Ruyen's ship. The hawk was very fast, they didn't need to wait for the evening to find Ruyen's vessel.

Although Ruyen rode on a ship, the vessel was just an ordinary three-masted cargo ship. It didn't have any special features. Aside from Ruyen, there were also some guards and servants that came along to meet her. When Zhao Hai looked closely, he could notice some Purcell Family elders that were 8th rank, all of them were warriors.

Such strength wasn't bad, 8th ranks were already considered to be experts on the continent. Only an anomaly like Zhao Hai would consider them as subpar.

Now that they spotted Ruyen, Zhao Hai didn't make his move immediately. He would wait until dark before he'll release the Swordfish to catch up to Ruyen's ship so nobody would notice.

Seeing that it was already late, Zhao Hai and the others came out of the Space. Not long after Zhao Hai went out, Charlie also came out of his room looking very well rested.

Zhao Hai immediately had the some chairs brought to the deck.

The group sat on down and chatted with each other while enjoying the seascape. At the same time, they also ate dinner.

After having their dinner, Charlie returned to his room to rest. Zhao Hai also returned to his room, and since it was currently dark, he needed to find an appropriate time to release the Swordfish that would escort Ruyen.

Since the skies were still turning dark, Zhao Hai didn't hurry. He observed the situation on Ruyen's ship. It may have been because of her recent experiences, but Ruyen had become more mature. Her change was too noticeable that the servants who came for her immediately felt it. She is much quieter than before, she also became more considerate. She was very polite to the servants, which made them quite flattered.

But Zhao Hai didn't care about these changes, he only cared about Ruyen's security. As long as Ruyen didn't suffer an accident, then all is good.

After the skies turned pitch black, Zhao Hai looked for an area not too far from Ruyen's ship and released the Swordfish.

He also called out a blood hawk and sent it towards Purcell Duchy. In a few days, Laura's people would arrive and they needed to be transported using the ghost staff.

After doing all of these, Zhao Hai didn't know what else to do. Even if it was already dark, he didn't have the urge to sleep, this applied to Laura and the others as well. This was because they were waiting for the sun to rise in the morning, by then the detoxification potion would be finished.

While thinking of these, the group just sat on the living room and looked at each other. They couldn't help but laugh.

Zhao Hai opened his mouth, "We shouldn't be waiting for the result in here. Let's go to our rooms and rest. When we wake up tomorrow morning, the detoxification potion should be finished."

Laura nodded and stood up, “We cannot just sit here the entire evening, we need to rest. Also, Brother Hai, when you consume the potion tomorrow, you should call Grandpa Green’s group over, otherwise they wouldn’t forgive you.”

Zhao Hai nodded, he knew that Laura was speaking the truth. If he didn’t call Green and the others over, they would certainly complain to him for their entire lifetime.

The group returned to their respective rooms and the Space became peaceful. Zhao Hai was lying on his bed and thinking about all of what happened when he arrived at Ark Continent. Before long, he fell asleep.

...

For who knows how long, Zhao Hai suddenly woke up. He looked out of the window and saw a bright sky.

Zhao Hai went out of his room and turned the monitor on. The outside sky was also bright, but not that much, it seems like it was still very early morning.

He immediately went outside and walked towards the Processing Factory. Surprisingly, Shun was already standing there, looking at the digits that were constantly changing. It was obvious that the potion was still not ready.

Seeing Zhao Hai arrive, Shun immediately bowed and said, “Young Master.”

Zhao Hai showed a faint smile and asked, “You didn’t rest?” He looked at the digits that showed 2 hours.

With an embarrassed face, Shun replied, “I couldn’t fall asleep, so I came out to have a look. I hope I didn’t disturb young masters rest.”

Zhao Hai shook his head with a smile. At this time, footsteps could be heard. Zhao Hai turned his head to see Laura and the others approaching. Zhao Hai couldn’t help but smile upon looking

at their appearance. Laura and Meg also smiled towards Zhao Hai.

Zhao Hai chuckled and said, “Well, we still have two hours. Let’s go to Iron Mountain Fort and wake up Grandpa Green and the others.” The group nodded and with a thought, Zhao Hai moved them to Iron Mountain Fort.

Upon arriving at the fort’s living room, Zhao Hai couldn’t help but stare. Aside from Green and the two elders, Karen was also present. Seeing Zhao Hai and the others arrive, Karen stared before he opened his mouth, “Why did you just arrive now? We had been waiting for the whole evening.”

Zhao Hai looked at the group and smiled, “It’s nothing, I just went to bed. I just happen to wake up early today. Grandma Merine, please whip up something to eat. After breakfast, we’ll head back to the Space.”

Merine nodded with a smile on her face. Then she called Meg and Laura over to the kitchen. Laura was currently studying how to prepare food. Even though she had no talent, and the food that she made were mostly inedible, she still studied diligently.

Looking at Merine and the others preparing the food, Zhao Hai turned to Green and said, “Grandpa Green, how is the beer’s progress doing?”

Green smiled and said, “The time is too short. The liquor needs to be fermented for a while. This time, we did a few experiments to find out which materials are useful. We tried bamboo rice, barley, bread fruit, spatial water, ordinary water, cold water, as well as warm water. I believe there should be at least one of those that will succeed.

Zhao Hai smiled, “That’s good. As long as we succeed, then it’s fine. Also, what container do you plan on storing the beer in? We should make sure to seal the beer properly, otherwise we would only be selling low quality beer.”

Little Jin wasn't present at this time. Because of the transmission point on Ape Island, Zhao Hai would know what Little Jin was doing.

Green replied, "Rest assured, we will not have any issues with this. At first, we wanted to use a wooden barrel but there seems to be some issues with the lid. Now we're currently finding ways to improve it, you don't have to worry."

Zhao Hai nodded, then sighed,. "As long as we make this beer properly, it could certainly be our Buda Clan's biggest source of income . The future demand for this thing wouldn't be any less than that of grain."

Karen looked at Zhao Hai and said, "Are you really sure? I've tasted that thing, it is too acidic, not really tasty."

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, "When the beer ferments properly, you'll be convinced. There are only a few people who could resist the temptation of beer."

After the group chatted for a while, Merine brought the dishes. Zhao Hia and the others immediately went to the dining hall. Upon finishing their breakfast, they went to the Space and gathered around the Processing Factory.

In the Multipurpose Processing Machine, the digits shown had become 20 minutes. The group couldn't sit well inside the villa, so they just stood inside the Processing Factory and waited, they waited for the countdown to reach zero.

Chapter 400 – Pleasantly Surprised

Ten. Nine. Eight. Seven. Six. Five. Four. Three. Two. One!

The heartbeat of all those present synchronized with the ticking down of the timer. When the number turned to zero, they even felt as though their hearts have stopped.

A white light flashed inside the Processing Factory, then a small bottle appeared on the ground. The bottle was quite small, about the size of a palm, it had a flat bottom. Seeing through its transparent body, one could see a blue liquid. At this time, a prompt was heard, “Special Purpose Detoxification Potion for the Water of Nothingness completed, administer orally, one time use. After ingestion, toxin shall be removed, impurities will be discharged. At the same time, Host’s body will be strengthened, advised to take the potion along with a Goldmetal Fruit, the effects will be better.”

Zhao Hai stared, but he immediately took the small bottle and gazed at the blue liquid inside it. Green and the others also stared at the liquid with bated breath, probably afraid that the bottle would disappear if they breathed strongly..

Zhao Hao turned his head to look at the others, he showed a faint smile, “I think that the Space wouldn’t deceive me, I should go buy a Goldmetal Fruit. Then I will go consume the two of them together, what does Grandpa Green think?”

Green looked at Zhao Hai and said, “Young Master, what are you planning on practicing, Magic or Battle Qi?”

Zhao Hai smiled faintly, “Battle Qi, of course. Now that I can use 8th rank Magic by using the Space, it would be redundant to learn Magic. I seem to remember about you saying that our family has the Wild Dragon Battle Qi being passed down, I hear that it’s very famous in the continent, I’ll train hard using that.”

Green's eyes became wet as he laughed and said, "Good, good! Young Master is certainly worthy to be a Buda Clan member. I can teach you the true version of the Wild Dragon Battle Qi that our Buda Family has been secretly passing on."

Zhao Hai stared for a moment before he asked Green, "Grandpa Green, what did you say? What do you mean true version of the Wild Dragon Battle Qi? You mean that there's another version that isn't genuine?"

Green smiled faintly, "Right, our Buda Clan's Battle Qi technique can be said to be one of the most famous techniques in the continent. Not only is the way it is practiced different, the attack strength of our technique is leagues better than most. Because of this, a lot of people became jealous. Thus, our Clan's Wild Dragon Battle Qi has been divided into two versions. The first version is the simplified one, it has a weaker attack strength as well as a slow rate of practice. That version couldn't compare to the true version of our Wild Dragon Battle Qi manual."

Zhao Hai smiled, "That's good to hear, but we still need to wait until my toxin gets removed. Teaching me when that time arrives wouldn't be too late." Then he took the bottle and headed to the villa's living room along with the others following behind him.

Inside the living room, Zhao Hai placed the small bottle on the table first before opening the Spatial Store and buying a Goldmetal Fruit.

Now that the Goldmetal Fruit has been digitized, it could now be bought in the shop. However, its price wasn't that cheap. At this moment, it was the most expensive thing in the shop, costing 10 thousand gold coins per fruit.

But Zhao Hai didn't care about the price, he immediately bought the fruit and placed it beside bottle. He took the bottle and removed the cork. He looked at the liquid inside before raising his head and downing the liquid into his mouth.

It wasn't until the bottle was empty before he placed it down. He flapped his lips but couldn't taste any residual flavor. Then he took the Goldmetal fruit and took several bites one after another.

Every single person in the room looked at Zhao Hai eating the Goldmetal fruit. They just stayed in their place and stared at him.

Zhao Hai licked his lip, the fruit's flavor was extremely good. It had a cool feeling as well as a sweet and sour flavor. This made Zhao Hai secretly want to eat another one.

Zhao Hai looked at the others' appearance and couldn't help but laugh, "I didn't expect that the taste of this fruit would actually be very pleasant." After he finished talking, he suddenly felt a rumbling sensation in his belly. Zhao Hai's face changed before he charged towards the toilet while holding on to his stomach.

Inside the toilet, Zhao Hai immediately unbuttoned his pants and sat down. The stench that emanated from the toilet almost made Zhao Hai faint.

After 'working hard' for about 10 minutes, Zhao Hai was about to collapse, this wasn't what he expected to happen. He immediately got some tissue paper from the Space and cleaned himself up. When he stared at what he just left behind, he felt very disgusted. What he saw was something black, akin to asphalt, it dispersed waves of gut retching odor. Zhao Hai could even swear that he just saw insects flying around the toilet.

Zhao Hai quickly covered the toilet and pressed the flush button. He also turned the exhaust fan on. When he felt that the air inside the restroom became better, he immediately walked out.

Although Zhao Hai felt that he was on the verge of collapsing, there was a sense of extreme relief that came about him. This weird feeling made him both uncomfortable and glad.

When he came out of the restroom, he saw Green and the others waiting for him. Seeing Zhao Hai come out, Green immediately

inquired, “Young Master, how are you feeling? Are you alright?”

Zhao Hai shook his head and said, “I’m fine, I feel good, but I’m feeling very weak.” Meg immediately went forward to support Zhao Hai as they headed back to the living room. After Zhao Hai sat down, a glass of water was given to him.

After drinking the glass of water, Zhao Hai felt a bit better. Scratch that, it was a LOT better. He felt that he was full of strength, something he never felt before.

Green and the others stared at Zhao Hai. He placed his glass down and smiled, “I’m feeling so much better. That feeling earlier must have been the potion’s side effect. Now I feel that my body is overflowing in strength.”

Green’s heart was moved, he immediately said to Zhao Hai, “Young Master, I think the things that the Space produces are all very special. How about I impart the Wild Dragon Battle Qi Technique to you right now. Let’s see what results come up.”

Zhao Hai nodded, then Green quickly told Zhao Hai the instructions to practice the Wild Dragon Battle Qi Technique. Upon hearing the instructions, Zhao Hai was surprised, this was because this technique was unexpectedly quite the same as Earth’s Internal Strength techniques. Just like how it was described in martial arts novels, the technique practices the body through the various acupoints inside.

In Ark Continent, before one practices their Battle Qi through the acupoints, one needed to train their bodies first. Once their bodies have reached a certain rank, then they could train their Battle Qi. As long as they establish a minor cycle of qi within their bodies, then they would have reached minor mastery. This rank gives the person close to 5th rank in strength.

However, the Wild Dragon Battle Qi was different, this technique didn’t need you to train your body first. Everybody was able to practice this technique, naturally, those who had innate talent in

cultivation would have much faster progress than those who had worse.

Zhao Hai had read a lot of Battle Qi techniques these past few days, so one could say that he had a bit of understanding about Battle Qi. Simultaneously, he had already memorized all of the acupoints inside a human's body. This was because knowing those points were tantamount to cultivating Battle Qi.

Now that Green imparted the technique to him, he immediately understood it. He remembered the route according to the technique and started to try to probe for the sensation that one needed to feel.

In practicing Battle Qi, the most difficult part wasn't advancement, but this sensation that one must acquire so that they could embark on their cultivation journey. This sensation was nothing but ethereal, it relied completely on your internal senses. After many years of experimentation on the continent, they had found out that those who had good body strength were able to achieve this feeling easier. This was also the reason why most train their bodies before starting to train in Battle Qi.

Zhao Hai expected to have difficulties in feeling out the sensation, but he didn't think that when he just started the process, something like ants crawling in his meridians were immediately felt. It evolved into a torrential flow before completing the first rank of the Wild Dragon Battle Qi technique.

Then, the second rank was attained, then the third, the fourth, the fifth, and it stopped at the sixth rank. Zhao Hai felt that he was being excessive and stopped advancing, then he continued to operate the six ranks of the technique.

Every time the technique made a revolution, Zhao Hai felt that his body's battle qi increase by a point. He slowly felt the Battle Qi in his body becoming like a river that rushed along his meridians. The river was golden in color, with a few black, blue, cyan, and red

colors mixed in.

The movement of this river became quicker and quicker, and when Zhao Hai felt that the river could break through his meridian's limitation, he immediately attacked the 7th rank. Looking as though the river had found an exit, it immediately rushed into the meridians and immediately broke through the 7th rank. When he broke through the 7th rank, the river began to calm down. However, Zhao Hai still felt that there was still enough power to go on. So he continued to circulate his Battle Qi along the 7th rank and slowly accumulated the quantity of qi inside his body.

Before long, when he felt like his limits were about to be broken through, Zhao Hai immediately started to attack the 8th rank.

The operation was very smooth as he quickly broke through to the 8th rank. Then the river of Battle Qi calmed down. Zhao Hai felt his own veins become sturdy, his skeleton hard, his muscles powerful, and his skin durable. However, this time, he felt that he could no longer continue on.

Zhao Hai was very confused, he didn't know why all of these happened. Then suddenly, he thought about the Magic brought by the Space. The Magic of the Space had already reached 8th rank. Now, his Battle Qi has also reached the 8th rank, it seems like all of these were linked to the Space.

Upon thinking about this, Zhao Hai stopped his cultivation. He slowly opened his eyes and saw Green and the group looking at him anxiously. Zhao Hai couldn't help but show a faint smile and said, "What happened? I'm fine, I just circulated by Battle Qi, everyone doesn't need to be so nervous."

Green forced a smile and asked, "Young Master, you didn't JUST practice Battle Qi. You've been doing it for a full day and night. Young master, what Battle Qi rank have you reached?"

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